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THE BOOKMAN

THE AMERICAN TRADITION

By John Farrar

IS there enough of New England or of upstate New York in you to remember the famous stove in the country store? Do you recall the crowd that gathered there of a winter afternoon, most of them white whiskered and querulous? They convened for reminiscence and argumentation. I can see my great grandfather stamping in, with "Hurrah for General Jackson!"; and presently the discussion would whisk to politics, to questions antedated but, nevertheless, finding swift and violent partizanship, while I stood by hoping against hope that a real fight would start. Here came the old in body and in mind to air their prejudices, to argue with conviction and with no intention of ever, themselves, being convinced either by word or fisticuff. Here, perhaps, was born American criticism—and the country stove has not passed into oblivion, nor does it confine its interests to life and politics. Its ghost is to be found in the literary clubs of Chicago and New York, at Schlogl's and at the Hotel Algonquin, in the offices of Messrs. Mencken and Nathan, at coffee houses and in luncheon circles. Argufying for the sake of the argument. Criticism for the sake of criticizing and, alas, too often for the sake of the critic!

Most of our critics of literature do not criticize our literature. They criticize ourselves. They are busy either defending the American scene, or hating it. Few of them have found the middle ground of honest reflection. Few of them have trusted their intuition with regard to America, or have taken pains to know her worst and her best, in an effort to achieve a real affection for her. They have gone back centuries to make ethical matters again the basis of criticism; more often than not immorality rather than morality is their demand. Like tight lipped old men, they stand shaking yellowed beards and shouting: "This ain't the way in Germany!" or "Now, the Russians would do it otherwise!" or "This isn't the way it was in the '90's". They will have things their

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way or not at all; they refuse to accept the best things of each mood. And the public, childishly fond of tags, flock in mimic parade behind those who shout most loudly and display banners with the prettiest symbols, shibboleths easiest to understand; so that around the smaller stoves in literary circles and study clubs they may prove themselves by apt quotation from some fountainhead of inspiration.

Our younger critics have found a culture which they claim is based on a Puritan philosophy, irksome. They have revolted; but like preparatory school boys they revolt from surface irritations, without much attempt to understand philosophical content. Like tight minded dons, most of those who attack the insurgents defend the same surface difficulties, which, though perhaps really irritating, are certainly not worth defending. Those who resent at once the Puritan and the mechanistic side of American civilization offer, for the most part, a sensual rather than a spiritual escape. They deny the wisdom of bodily repressions, while their opponents cry out for bodily discipline. Neither side gives much thought to beauty or discipline of soul. On the one hand lies hypocrisy, on the other, dissolution. Between them is the golden mean of the Greeks. The merely good is never popular—it is only the obviously good and the dissolute that catch the public eye. If Sinclair Lewis's George Babbitt is the average American citizen, no amount of diatribe will bend him intellectually or emotionally into a violent saint or a ripened sinner. Let's not try to change our good Rotarians into Saint Simeons; on the other hand, let's not command them to be Casanovas.

Why do the cleverly intellectual American critics leap to a destruction of the American tradition? It is not age old; but is it not, in the main, fairly good? If we are to carry on a pure cultural stream to future years, must it not be based after all on the culture of our ancestors—and was their culture less profound than that of today? It is dangerous to be impatient with household gods. Our Lares and Penates do not like to be forgotten. To destroy old gods and to set up new ones makes for shallow worship, and modern temples are not without their Baals.

If the past is thoroughly bad only the most grimly reactionary will hesitate to destroy it. Is our past, though, so bad? Is the American literary tradition a myth? Do Irving and Franklin, Emerson and Hawthorne belong among the culturally damned? What of Holmes and Lowell? What of Frank Norris and Stephen Crane? What of countless others acknowledged, some of them, by the new critics but certainly not with much stress, enthusiasm, or reiteration?

It is perfectly true that the rising popularity of our great magazines, while it has given a new chance to some of our best writers, did tend for a number of years to place a rubber stamp on our average literary output, to encourage a stuffy piousness and a worship of success that was certainly never an integral part of our tradition. It is only natural that, breaking away from this tendency, we should demand something radically different. But let us not be tricked by those who offer radical remedies into forgetting our birthright. This birthright of ours is in part the spirit of the northern colonies, the rigorous discipline of the conquerors of wilderness and plain, the strength of character that made Plymouth possible and spread English civilization beyond the Mississippi and across the Rockies. In part it is the

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spirit of the Cavaliers, of Lord Baltimore and his southern colonies. It represents, therefore, a combination of Puritan and pagan ideal, yet with a background of purpose and tenacity. Such a birthright is rich in folk lore and in mingling of varied bloods—Indian and Negro, French, Spanish, Dutch, Hessian, Mexican. It has already produced literary groups of varying characteristics; but, I repeat, with an underlying principle which is strong in directing power and purpose for accomplishment. The very battle of Puritan and Cavalier, which many persons forget, which lies at the back of some of our cultural inconsistencies, has given to what might otherwise have been a drab scene, a varied coloring, a rich design.

Let us not be fooled, while we admire the moral courage and the bluff independence of a Theodore Dreiser, into thinking that he in any way ranks with or destroys the importance of an Emerson. The greatest problem which American literature faces is the absorption of later immigrant genius. A stern and rigorous culture, with ideals as firm as ours, must naturally weaken and scatter under influences of orientalism or, in fact, under most insoluble alien influences. Joseph Conrad, a Pole, chose the English language and the English tradition in which to write because he admired them. His greatness is built upon them and enriched by his racial inheritance. While we can welcome the foreigner who chooses American literature as his medium because he admires it, we must beware those who are simply foisting surface transcriptions of their own creeds, some of them shoddy and outworn, upon us.

H. L. Mencken, when he takes his destructive pen in hand to write "On Being an American", even if he can prove his views by documentation, can scarcely expect the descendants of Bradford, of the Allens, of Rolfe and Smith, of Clark and Boone, of Lee and Calhoun, to agree with him. Surely we should be a sorry offspring if we belittled our own heroes and destroyed our gods.

"All of which may be boiled down to this," writes Mr. Mencken from his Teutonic hobby horse, "that the United States is essentially a commonwealth of third-rate men—that distinction is easy here because the general level of culture, of information, of taste and judgment, of ordinary competence is so low. No sane man, employing an American plumber to repair a leaky drain, would expect him to do it at the first trial, and in precisely the same way no sane man, observing an American Secretary of State in negotiation with Englishmen and Japs, would expect him to come off better than second best. Third-rate men, of course, exist in all countries, but it is only here that they are in full control of the state, and with it of all the national standards. The land was peopled, not by the hardy adventurers of legend, but simply by incompetents who could not get on at home, and the lavishness of nature that they found here, the vast ease with which they could get livings, confirmed and augmented their native incompetence. No American colonist, even in the worst days of the Indian wars, ever had to face such hardships as ground down the peasants of Central Europe during the Hundred Years War, nor even such hardships as oppressed the English lower classes during the century before the Reform Bill of 1832. In most of the colonies, indeed, he seldom saw any Indians at all: the one thing that made life difficult for him was his congenital dunderheadedness. The

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winning of the West, so rhetorically celebrated in American romance, cost the lives of fewer men than the single battle of Tannenberg, and the victory was much easier and surer. The immigrants who have come in since those early days have been, if anything, of even lower grade than their forerunners." If Mr. Mencken chooses to believe these things of his America—for he is an American in spite of himself, for better or for worse—it is none of my affair. If he thinks, however, that American politics and culture can be improved by creating a scorn of the heroes of Bunker Hill and Bull Run, by a substitution of admiration for those who fought at Tannenberg as our national ideal, his opinion is not only obviously quixotic—which is undubitably what he wishes—but also obviously absurd.

I cannot refrain from opposing to Mr. Mencken's sentences two paragraphs by a critic of his own generation. It is possible that Stuart Pratt Sherman places too much emphasis on the rigors of New England and sees too little the great melting pot of America as a whole. Personally, I think not. His chief critics as a rule misread his admirable essays and misunderstand his somewhat involved definition of Puritanism. His faith is at least built on a foundation of national idealism, and even the most flippant of the metropolitan critics cannot deny Dr. Sherman a measure of culture, nor can they accuse him of Rotarianism. In "The Genius of America" he says:

> I know how differently our young people feel; but, to my thinking, a national genius animated by an incomparably profound moral idealism does not seem such a contemptible moulding and formative influence for an artist to undergo. English-speaking poets, from Spenser to Walt Whitman, have grown great under the influence of such an environing spirit. At any rate, if the great artist, in expressing himself, expresses also the society of which he is a part, it should seem to follow, like a conclusion in geometry, that a great American artist must express the "profound moral idealism" of America. To rail against it, to lead an insurrection against it, is to repeat the folly of the Restoration wits. If in this connection one may use a bit of the American language, it is to "buck" the national genius; and this is an enterprise comparable with bucking a stone wall. On the other hand to acknowledge the leadership of the national genius, to subject one's self to its influence, to serve it according to one's talents, to find beautiful and potent forms to express its working—this is to ally one's self with the creative effort of the country in all fields of activity; this is to be in a benign conspiracy with one's time and place, and to be upborne by the central stream of tendency.
>
> There is small place for Bohemia in democratic art. I sometimes wonder with what spiritual refugees, under what rafters, those poets and novelists live who are so anxious to secede from the major effort of their countrymen. For their own sake one wishes that they might cultivate acquaintance with our eminent "builders of civilization". The good that I should expect from this contact is a vision of the national life, a sense of the national will, which are usually possessed in some degree by those Americans, whatever their æsthetic deficiencies, who bear the burden of the state, or are widely conversant with its business, or preside over its religious, moral, or educational undertakings. I do not intend in the least to suggest that the artist should become propagandist or reformer, or that he should go to the bishop or the statesman for a commission, though I believe that Leonardo and Michael Angelo did some very tolerable things under direct inspiration of that nature. What one feels is rather that intercourse with such men might finally create in our artistic secessionists a consciousness of the ignobility of their aims. For in America it will be found more and more that the artist who does not in some fashion concern himself with truth, morals, and democracy, is unimportant, is ignoble.

During the past five years we have known a period in which writers of satire, both genial and bitter, have flourished. Has not this time of destructive criticism very nearly passed? And if it continues shall we not soon be laughing at our strengths as well as our weaknesses? Shall we

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not soon be mistaking the merely clever for the sound? Are we not already rating superficial intellectuality above sincerity? If we can find beauty only in the mind, and in one type of mind, we are soon lost in argumentation or embroidered flippancies. We approach life then, with a monstrous chip on our shoulders. Now that we have come to smile at our Babbitts, why not learn to love them again, even if we do not find it in us to respect?

My desk is flooded with letters of vigorous complaint, as is the desk of any editor, for the impulse to express disagreement is apparently more human than to voice approval. Practically every day I can pick you examples from two types of persons. The first of these is usually a nice middle aged lady who comes fresh from discussion in her literary club. Her letter goes something like this:

"I have read your magazine for twenty years. I feel that I have a right to complain. You are trying to destroy the literary ideals of my youth, and you further the efforts of these young log rollers who spend all their time praising each other and breaking the ten commandments. I suppose I am old fashioned, but I long for better days."

From such a letter I turn with a sigh. What does she mean? Can she really read what is written herein? If she troubles to answer a request for more specific details I usually find that what she regrets are the days of Henry van Dyke's youth and the heyday of O. Henry. She does not read her Emerson or her Hawthorne or her Poe. She is out of date because her appreciation was founded, not on any basic literary tradition, but on the popular mode of writing in her younger days.

The second type will become the first in twenty-five years. She is young, in college or fresh from it. She is quite angry.

"You are a prig", says she forcibly. "You do not like the works of Carl Van Vechten and now you object to Floyd Dell's 'Janet March'. They should be crowned with laurels. They understand sex. They have made us laugh at it."

In the distant future when the pendulum has swung back, as it must, this young miss will be writing to my successor and she will say:

"I have been a reader of your magazine for twenty years. Who are all these new writers you are publishing? They are curiously stodgy. I cannot understand them. Oh, for the older times!"

Is there no room in life and letters for the man who would see the best of each side? Must he be seated either firmly on the left or squarely on the right? Is there no toleration for the tolerant middle? I should like to believe that there is a public interested in good writing, even in attempted good writing, that wishes to see a little into all camps, even while it keeps for its own guidance a definite ideal. To this public I am addressing myself.

May I again borrow from Stuart Pratt Sherman to say that I believe a "strong moral idealism" lies at the basis of the American tradition; that this may be called "Puritanism"; that in spite of mixtures and alien influences American writing, to be American, to progress as American writing, must be founded on this Puritanism, which is akin to a sense of duty, to character.

In this Puritan tradition we have many contemporaneous writers, of varying racial inheritance: Robert Frost, Edith Wharton, Amy Lowell, Willa Cather, Sinclair Lewis, Mary

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Austin, Robert Nathan, Eugene O'Neill, James Branch Cabell, and a number of others. Some of them show strongly racial mixtures with no variation, I believe, of fundamental sincerity: the Indian in Mary Austin, the Scandinavian in Willa Cather, the Jewish in Robert Nathan, the Cavalier in James Branch Cabell, the Celt in Eugene O'Neill. Outside of this tradition we have not a few, among them the Van Vechtens, the Hechts, the Waldo Franks and John Dos Passoses, and, to some extent, the Dells and Hergesheimers.

What I am urging here is a little honest thought before we jump hither and yon with the newest fad in American letters. I am not afraid the American tradition will be either forgotten or destroyed, even though it should be obscured for a century. I am somewhat afraid that our own generation will miss much because of a failure to recognize and appreciate it, because of a rather silly literary and ethical discussion which will in the end lead, I firmly believe, back to where we started, to the ideals that inspired Emerson, that motivated Stonewall Jackson and Abraham Lincoln.

AS TO POETS

From the "Four Discourses" of Sumarqandi, Friend of Omar Khayyam

By Arthur Guiterman

MY Prince, 'twere well, for good report,
To have a bard about thy court
Whose song may cheer the laggard days
And yield my lord his due of praise.
But when a bard is ill to hear,
I charge thee, lend him not thine ear
Nor pay him either silver, gold,
Or brass—at least if he be old.
For crows and owls are no whit worse
Than full grown men who make bad verse,
And princely wealth is evilly spent
That gives such pests encouragement.
For one long seized of man's estate
Who chants rude songs before thy gate
Unwitting how his numbers jar,
Will never learn how bad they are.
Yet if thy bard be young, have grace
To bear with him a little space.
The fledgling nightingale must grow
Before he charms the rose; and though
A stripling's work be somewhat rough,
In time he may do well enough.

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BROUGHT TO EARTH

By Leslie Field

With Sketches by Edith Whitcomb Morrell

A MILE or less from the village the road, taking a sharp bend to the right, marks a turning point for strollers who may turn their faces west to meet the prevailing summer wind. "As far as the turn", lovers said in the evening, and children on pilgrimage for flowers in spring, and those who went once in the cool of the day for a breath of air. Beyond the bend the road showed less travel worn. The ruts made in spring floodtime remained longer as ruts; even, here and there, a sprout of grass and weed made headway; and Hattie Cole, during the sixty years since she was born, had seen considerably less of the world than if she had lived a hundred yards nearer Staunton. As it was: "Oh she lives", Staunton said, "on the other side of nowhere." Which, since there are those who speak of Staunton as being on the other side of nowhere, thrusts Hattie Cole into somewhat starlike remoteness.

Not that she realized the difference that Webster's Bend made to her. She had used to complain, when she had children no taller than a snowdrift going and coming from school, that the snow plow stopped short of her door yard by too few feet to make it worth anything in money or time to the town or the driver. But now that had ceased to trouble her. She herself seldom went into the road. Once a week, perhaps, she drove to Staunton; and in the spring she went slowly gathering dandelion leaves along the road ditches, when she could be pleased that

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they were comparatively free of dust, even in a rainless time. Her daily life, which had once been as far reaching as Staunton, had first withdrawn, backward like a snail into its shell and at a snail's pace, around Webster's Bend, and then into her kitchen. What she had come to was vague considerations of vague memories. She was so far removed that nothing of the outer world which did not come to her, seek her out, could stir her passive, indefinite existence. Whatever came was of necessity unkind to her, shattering her spirit in rousing it from a state between life and death, as the shifting of a stove log in the winter nights shattered her body in waking her from her frail sleep.

A stormy evening late in March, when, as it seemed to her, the roof slopes shed sheets of water, sliced by the ridge pole, that held her prisoner as behind Niagara, brought her a guest. She was aware of something or someone fumbling at the panels of her door. She was startled, enough at least to break the rhythm of her rocking, and to have a moment in which she thought of rousing her husband from the couch where he slept with his pipe on his breast, before she heard breathing between door and sill which proved whatever it was less than human, and so not to be feared. She threw the door wide to it, letting the wind have free play with the lamp flame, which poised for an instant in mid air, like a dancer, and caught the wick again within a mere hair's breadth of extinction. And, having regained its balance, it showed her what had entered with the wind: a long, wolf headed dog, that, in only tentative acceptance of his welcome, swept in a swift circle of investigation about the room, filling it with the needle like click and scrape of claws on wood. Coming to her again he signified his intention of staying by abandoning himself to such a spasm of shaking as left her uncertain, blinded as she was by the rain he shed, whether it was not his bones that rattled. At least the suggestion was vivid enough to move her to action with its correlative idea.

"You must be half starved", she said. She touched the wet head with her corded hand, and then dried the hand on her apron, somewhat as a child might dry its cheek, furtively, after a kiss.

As well as she could, for the dog pushing against her knees, she brought him bread and milk in a tin dish, and let him wake her husband by driving the dish before him across the room in an effort to eat all there was to be eaten. She stood watching him with an odd tumult in her heart. What remained to her of thought and emotion came back awkwardly out of the mists and hovered above him, glad of something to give them focus.

John Cole sat up on the edge of the couch, catching his pipe deftly as it slipped from his breast.

"What's all the racket? Hugh! Lost dog."

The dog rushed him. He caught the thrusting head between his hands, like a wedge, flattening the ears and drawing back the eyes to slots of liquid light. He brought his own face low to the dog's.

"Ha-a, you big hound-dog, you", he snarled, shaking his head. "Rain storm caught you out chasin' a rabbit, did it? Go lie down, you poor lost critter."

He pushed the dog from him. Hattie, watching across the table, was aware that he rose and carried the lamp from her into the kitchen bedroom, leaving her in a darkness cut through by a swath of light from the

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doorway. But no outer light could help her find what she was trying to see with eyes turned inward upon herself. What she would see when she found it—it was perhaps too dim as yet to be more than felt—was a belief that the dog, come to her tonight out of the storm, was more found than lost.

Before going to the bedroom herself, she stoked the kitchen range with wood and spread before it on the floor the plaid horse blanket from the couch. Standing in the door between the rooms, her shadow thrown grotesquely up the further wall of the kitchen, she braided her thin, white hair, and watched the dog, by his way of settling himself, twist the blanket into a spiral. Irregular lights from the stove flashed out at his head, coming and going with the come and go of flames. His eyes took the light and made it a light of their own which deceived her into seeing more in them, perhaps, than a dog has to show.

She was deceived; none the less she waited with a stilled heart—when in honor bound she opened the door to free him next morning—to see to what extent he would take his freedom. He proved, by circling to her in boomerang flight around the pear tree, that what she held him by now was something more than house walls. He was free and yet he stayed. She was even bold enough, on the strength of this knowledge, to point the way for him up the road: "Go home!" His eyes

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left hers and followed along her arm, her hand and finger, but not beyond. From her finger tip they completed a triangle by returning directly to her eyes. What was it she was asking of him? She didn't consider it necessary to make any further effort to explain.

II

The spring took on for her a new brightness. She came out of her house in the afternoons and stood on her kitchen door step in the sun. And, standing there, it was not only the sun, throwing its level rays into her pale eyes, that gave her the appearance of being blinded. Her wrinkled face had also the webbed blindness of a moth freshly emerged from the cocoon.

She looked up at Warren Hill, brought near by the cool, distant spring sky behind it. She remembered the view from there when, as a girl, she had climbed it for berries. Not that she could actually remember having looked at the view for the view's sake at the time, but she was stirred now by a feeling of its presence out of the corner of her eye, at her elbow, as she must have felt it while she knelt before the low blueberry bushes, her attention apparently all for the picking. She and the dog would walk up there after the mud dried—or, rather, she would walk and the dog would run, the dog doing many times the distance in running from her and back to her over and over again, barking at her with a certain humorous patience, as much as to say: "We'll get you there some day, old lady!"

They would do that later. Now the dog, taking the snow patched yard in flying bounds, sprang at her. He stood against her, leaving the print of his paws in black mud on her white apron. She tried ineffectually to defend her face from his panting tongue. "Go 'way", she said, smiling a little. "What do you think I'm made of?" He left her again, going in a dancing run toward the woods, tedding the snow with his feet and nose, and barking a short, smothered bark that made her think of something coughed up, chewed and swallowed, like a cow's cud. He reached the fence along the woods, bayed through it at the black pines, and turned. Because he did turn back she drew a deep breath; and then a second to try with it to distinguish one from another the various smells the first had let her know were on the air: the smells of heating snow, rich, wet earth, rotted leaves, sap.

III

Then, at the end of a week, being in the village, she asked at the general store for a dog collar, the seal of possession. The clerk came forward to her, rubbing his hands gently one over the other. She shielded herself from him, above the level of the counter, behind her black string shopping bag stretched full with white parcels. With a smile of his own he tried to coax a smile from her.

"So you've acquired a dog?" he said. Vaguely distrustful of all that might be implied by "acquired", she showed him a face in which he failed to find even the dimmest light of expression behind the outward mask. Then she suddenly smiled with him.

"He has acquired me", she answered.

"Any name?" the clerk went on, "Any name, I mean, beside your own —the dog's name —?"

A dog's name! What seemed to her scarcely less than inspiration dispelled the flooding darkness that always descended upon her when she was asked to think quickly.

"Rover", she said. "Rover is a dog's

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name", she added, in gentle explanation.

The clerk raised his eyebrows and held his pencil poised. He could hardly tell her the name was too—too, oh everything, too pale, too lacking in originality; but he would give her a moment in which to see it for herself. She saw, much to his delight, another reason for his hesitation.

"Rover", she repeated. "R-o—"

"Oh, I know how to *spell* it!" He laughed and wrote the name with a flourish.

As she passed slowly out of the town along Bingham's Swamp, which, heated by the sun at noon, was now steaming in the cool of the evening, she listened for the dog's hunting bark, thinking he might have come out so far to meet her. But all that she heard was the spring peepers, a million strong, charging the mist with their cries. The horse took his time. He had used, before old age had dulled what keenness of anticipatory memory he possessed, to whirl her from the hitching post on two wheels, allowing her no time to tuck in the robe about her, and, in a burst of speed, had carried her half way home with her feet braced against the dashboard and the reins wound three times round her hands to ease their cutting edge. But now the most that could be expected was to keep him moving, for the sake of appearances, the length of the main street. Beyond the houses she let him stop where he pleased and start when he pleased. Tonight he stopped so often, and for so long, that it was all but dark when they turned Webster's Bend. Yet it was not so dark but that she was instantly aware of a car standing under the maple at the corner of the yard. The blood drew to her heart in a sudden contraction that, if her face had not already had the grey bloodlessness of age, would have left her pale, and, if she had been the one walking instead of the horse, would have stopped her where she was for breath. As it was, the horse brought her, by no volition of hers, into the yard and face to face with a man, a stranger, balancing on one foot before the door. His other foot bowed the neck of the dog that tried to leap at him as he had tried to leap at her when she stood in the same place. He left the dog and came forward to meet her, and the horse stopped before him. He took the two wheels, front and back, each in a large white hand. There was no escape from him. He seemed to hold her entire world at a standstill.

"I think you can guess what I've come for—?" He spoke with what she thought a certain mock consideration.

"The dog's your'n", she said, in a low voice, as if she had been expected to answer dutifully, like a child, a question put to her. She heard snatches of what he went on to say:

"Your name is Cole—Mrs. Cole, yes? Mine's Lawson. . . . I've taken a good share of the mud off this country looking for the brute; every point of the compass . . . Have a summer place over at Ashton, a good thirty miles I should say. . . . Hope he hasn't been a bother. Should think he might have been company for you. . . . He's a beauty, isn't he? Cost me a young fortune, though. . . . Rather a lonely place you have here, what? . . ." (He spoke to the dog who, impatient to be gone, was moving restlessly midway of the yard and barking furiously.) "Yes, yes, I'm with you."

He took his hands from her wagon, giving her, at last, her freedom. The horse accepted it for her. Slowly pulling himself together, he drew her, with a last brave effort, over the high

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sill into the barn where she faced, down a narrow, darkening passage between low mows of hay, a blank wall.

IV

A week later, when she sat rocking at her kitchen window in the afternoon, the dog returned. She showed no surprise. It was as if, in her rather perfect calmness since he had left her, she had been waiting for this to happen. She saw him clear the bend at a steady dog trot and break into a galloping run at sight of the house. As he crossed the yard she could see flecks of foam on his breast, fallen there from the tongue hanging loose and dripping at the corner of his mouth, and the mud, some grey and dry, some darker and wet, caked on his legs and under body. Only the tail was still held high, above all the dirt, like a banner.

At the door he thrust his nose at the crack and spoke for admission. John, sitting reading at the table, raised his glasses to his forehead and lowered his paper, to look at his wife between the two.

"That dog's come back?" he said.

"I see he has."

"Ain't you goin' to let him in?"

"You can."

Through the opened door the dog sprang straight to her. She put up her foot to keep him at his distance. And then, meeting something in *his* eyes, closed hers to try thus to hold him at another and greater distance, one more necessary to her comfort. Dear God, what a fool she had been. She had opened the door once to a dog and a March wind, and look what else, invisible and unbidden, had followed them in. (Yet what else could she have done? Tell her that!) She had been, at last, at peace, detached, lifted above the worldly, away from the terrifying rush of emotions that had always swept her off her feet. And now she had allowed a dog to bring her back, to lose for her all the ground she had gained. He had indeed brought her, as it were, to earth.

"Go 'long with you", she cried to him suddenly. "Go 'long with you."

She woke in the night and lay until the clock on the kitchen shelf struck two. It struck slowly, with a long preliminary wheezing before each count. Making its winding an excuse, she sat up on the edge of the bed and felt for the braided rug with her bare feet. She listened a moment for her husband's breathing. It was undisturbed. She fumbled for a match on the lamp stand, and after striking several whose crumbling ends proved them used, she found one that, in a puff of light, blew for itself a small yellow sphere within the black square of the room—a sphere that took in her hand, her face, and the dead lamp which, with a touch, she brought to life. With the lighting of the lamp the night retreated into the kitchen; but since she followed it there, it sprang by her, with mercuric swiftness, to the bedroom again. It almost seemed to her that the wind of its speed, as it passed her in the doorway, cooled her face.

She had come out to wind the clock. But once in the kitchen she went about something more to the purpose of her thoughts. She sought and found, in this corner and that, pen, ink, and paper—the ink pale with water added to eke it out over a period of years— and brought them together on the table under the light. She sat before them a long, long time, dipping the pen and absently tracing the faded design on the oilcloth, her thin shoulders narrowed and lifted against the chill of the room. The dog, wakened

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by her, moved in the shed. He brushed against the door closed between them; he tried his empty food dish standing on the hollow shed floor; he ran along the loose plank to the outer door. She read his every movement by the familiar sounds, knowing as clearly where he was and what he did as though she had been there to see.

What she finally wrote, in a cramped and laborious hand, on a soft paper that spread the ink like a blotter, was

Mr Lawson
Ashton
Dear sir
That dog of yours has come back he came tonight. Please come and get him as soon as convenient. He is quit a nusanse to you isn't he not being much of a home dog as you might say. Should advize you to keep him shut up as I can't be bothered with dogs leastways not *lost dogs*.

Mrs. Hattie Cole
Staunton

Lawson, in reading it, had not the faintest vision of the scene behind the letter. He could not see the woman sitting late at night in a dim kitchen, her bare feet lifted from the cold floor to the rung of her chair, listening, with extraordinary clarity of hearing, to his dog stirring in the house shed.

"Yo *ho!*" he exclaimed, after a second reading. "She didn't take such a fancy to 'me and my dawg'. I'll have to go fetch you out of the lion's den again, old boy. Why you ever went back! God, she makes 'lost dogs' sound more like lost souls. *Some*thing's chewing the poor old lady."

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MR. HAWTHORNE'S "SCARLET LETTER"

By Llewellyn Jones

Mr. Jones's article is the second of a series in which various of our younger critics will attempt to express the reactions which well known books of an earlier generation would arouse in them, were those classics newly published today.

AN analysis of human feelings and motives that is almost Freudian, a Puritan disapproval of earlier Puritanism mixed with much admiration of it, and a playing with Gothic romanticism that is in odd contrast to the divinatory psychology — these are the three main strands upon which the story of "The Scarlet Letter" is built.

The scarlet "A" with which the Puritans of Boston, in an age and place dark, and just tinged with the memories of Elizabethan magnificence, punished their adulterous women, is already on Hester Prynne's breast as she makes her entrance into the story from the Boston jail, carrying her infant in her arms. As she stands on the public scaffold it is Arthur Dimmesdale, her pastor and the partner of her passion, who has to urge her to divulge the name of the father of her child. That is dramatic, and when Hester's long absent husband wanders onto the scene in time to see his wife's disgrace one forgives the coincidence.

Indeed, the coincidence is soon forgotten in the realism of what follows. Hester's flight from the recognition of his eyes into the safer recognition of the thousand witnesses to her shame; Dimmesdale's charge to her with his half plea that she expose him; her refusal to speak and her vanishment again within the prison where "it was whispered, by those who peered after her, that the scarlet letter threw a lurid gleam along the dark passageway of the interior" — the motif of popular credulity as well as prejudice being struck there — all that is novel writing at its best.

The movement of the rest of the story is simple and climacteric. Hester with her child, living a life full of works of repentance, gradually makes for herself a claim upon the regard of her Puritan neighbors. Arthur Dimmesdale, haunted by his deed, seems to build from this very wound a spirituality that endears him to his congregation. And Roger Chillingworth, the husband who was wronged because he had never made good his rights, watches Dimmesdale. He suspects the preacher of being Hester's seducer; is certain, plans the slow and cunning revenge of keeping alive the wound; and then, in that penultimate scene is cheated of his revenge when his quarry, first curing his own wound by confession — and how artfully and naturally does Hawthorne contrive that his dull Puritans shall misunderstand that confession — goes beyond the jurisdiction of Chillingworth's vengeance or of his forgiveness.

Artfully and naturally is that contrived, and artfully and naturally must the whole story be set forth if it is to carry conviction. For it deals

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in the first place with a very human situation. A woman, married before she knows what marriage means to a cold blooded scholar, is sent by him to Puritan New England while he pursues his studies in Europe. Left for a long time, she falls deeply in love with a man, becomes the mother of his child, and is then punished by a rigid and unsympathetic community before whose faces the man is afraid to acknowledge his part. The teller of such a story must be pretty sure of himself: his artistic detachment must be absolute. Having given us Hester and Arthur Dimmesdale as seen directly, he must never make the mistake of giving us a version of them as seen through the Puritan spectacles of their contemporaries. Hawthorne occasionally does fall into this error, as in that passage which tells of Hester Prynne's becoming what used to be called a "freethinker", but refraining from preaching her truths because her first care was to educate her child. Hawthorne adds — speaking, we must remember, as author:

> The child's own nature had something wrong in it, which continually betokened that she had been born amiss — the effluence of her mother's lawless passion — and often impelled Hester to ask, in bitterness of heart, whether it were for ill or for good that the poor little creature had been born at all.

Whoever reads the book unblinded by admiration of the author must admit that artistically Pearl is almost a hopeless loss. About all she does is to skip and prance and bedevil her mother—and when Hawthorne is not attributing this to the circumstances surrounding her birth he sometimes in an aside admits that all children do that anyhow, be their legitimacy ever so legitimate. Of course Pearl acts also as a little *dea ex machina*, but that does not count when we consider her as a living child. The reason why Hawthorne could not put her before us as a living child is shown very clearly in that passage. Where he should be a pure artist—seeing, that is, the particular individual—he has become a moralist, seeing not a child at all but the representative of a class of children, the illegitimate children. And no such class exists in nature, nor does it exist in the Scandinavian countries, nor has it existed in those eras where women ruled: it exists in the Puritan consciousness. To live in a novel Pearl must be seen as Pearl herself would see herself—and no child sees itself as an illegitimate creature.

That lifelessness, combined with a sort of galvanic activity, a skipping like that of a frog's leg connected with a Leyden jar, is perhaps sufficient excuse for D. H. Lawrence to hazard the theory that Pearl is not a human character at all but a pure symbol. But Mr. Lawrence's view of symbolism is determined by his hypertrophy of that section of the cognitive faculty which deals in Freudian concepts—and his particular explanation of Pearl is not any more convincing than is the child herself.

That Hawthorne's mind is divided is shown also by a later passage, in that part of the story dealing with Dimmesdale's resolve to run away with Hester and the child—after the discovery that their love is still alive. Surely the decision was a good one. It promised to reunite the lovers, to give Pearl a father, and to save Dimmesdale's life—for he was rapidly breaking down under the strain of his wound and Chillingworth's probings of it. But when the minister is twitted—by that old dame who used the forest for her rendezvous with fellow members of the witch cult—with having spent some

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time there, the time which he spent with Hester, he becomes conscience stricken. Although the old lady has merely taken a shot in the dark, Dimmesdale begins to think that he may really have done as she suggests—sold himself to the devil.

For which we may forgive him. But can we forgive the author for capping the account of his perturbation in this manner:

> The wretched minister! He had made a bargain very like it. Tempted by a dream of happiness, he had yielded himself, with deliberate choice, as he had never done before, to what he knew was a deadly sin. And the infectious poison of that sin had been thus rapidly diffused throughout his moral system. It had stupefied all blessed impulses, and awakened into vivid life the whole brotherhood of bad ones. Scorn, bitterness, unprovoked malignity, gratuitous desire of ill, ridicule of whatever was good and holy, all awoke, to tempt, even while they frightened him. And his encounter with old Mistress Hibben, if it were a real incident, did but show his sympathy and fellowship with wicked mortals, and the world of perverted spirits.

To make the passage more explicable we should add that after his determination to go away with Hester and Pearl the minister feels frightful urgings to blaspheme when he meets a parishioner, to say dreadful things to his virgin parishioners. When we read that we simply put it down to the natural shock and rebound occasioned by the loosening of springs of action on his own behalf, after so many years of repression. When we read the author's comment on it, however, we must surely be aghast at such partizanship.

For what sin can it be to leave, with one's loved one, a parish that one can only serve by living a lie, and a lie corrosive of one's own soul? What Hawthorne forgets is that this Puritan society, even if we allow it the privilege of making what laws it will to preserve public morals, puts itself out of court by its first assumption in such cases as this: the assumption that it can not only discipline adulterers but put them to death. Hester, indeed, was saved only by the extenuating circumstance that her husband was not, at the time of her delinquency, giving her his protection. But virtue must be reciprocal. The Puritan commonwealth of Boston had no rights in the matter, and it would have been no sin for Arthur Dimmesdale to leave it, considering the fact that it was, on the basis of even the most elementary ethics, itself a sinner—a murderer potentially. In Hawthorne's outburst quoted above there is something unhealthily Puritan and bigoted.

But he is no mean psychologist when dealing with the soul that harbors a sin (if, after the above remarks, the reader wishes to know what the reviewer thinks is a sin, the answer is that anything is a sin which the sinner thinks to be a sin). Arthur Dimmesdale, under stress, it is true, and not without anguish, had done the mean thing: he had let Hester take his own as well as her own guilt, and publicly bear them both. The result is inevitable and well portrayed. Roger Chillingworth, except that his motives were not therapeutic but revengeful, might well be an early New England practitioner of the Freudian catharsis. Listen to him—and to his patient as he pursues his cruel analysis:

> "Let me ask—as your friend—as one having charge, under Providence, of your life and physical well-being—hath all the operation of this disorder been fairly laid open and recounted to me?"
>
> "How can you question it?" asked the minister. "Surely it were child's play to call in a physician, and then hide the sore!"
>
> "You would tell me, then, that I know all?" said Roger Chillingworth, deliberately, and fixing an eye, bright with intense and concentrated intelligence, on the minister's face. "Be it so! But again! He to whom only the outward and physical evil is laid

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open, knoweth, oftentimes, but half the evil which he is called upon to cure. A bodily disease, which we look upon as whole and entire within itself, may, after all, be but a symptom of some ailment in the spiritual part. Your pardon, once again, good sir, if my speech give the shadow of offence. You, sir, of all men whom I have known, are he whose body is the closest conjoined, and imbued, and identified, so to speak, with the spirit whereof it is the instrument" . . .

"Thus a sickness," continued Roger Chillingworth, going on in an unaltered tone, without heeding the interruption—but standing up, and confronting the emaciated and white-cheeked minister, with his low, dark, and misshapen figure—"a sickness, a sore place, if we may so call it, in your spirit, hath immediately its appropriate manifestation in your bodily frame. Would you, therefore, that your physician heal the bodily evil? How may this be unless you open to him the wound or trouble in your soul?"

And like the typical Freudian patient Arthur Dimmesdale does, though unknowingly, open up the sore place in his soul to Roger Chillingworth, and opens it through a piece of symbolism. For he literally hugs to his own bosom an illusory scarlet letter as if there were a physical stigma of it there.

Hawthorne suggests the Freudian psychology, too, in the devotion of Roger Chillingworth to his slow and subtle and satisfying mode of revenge. Its motive power he tells us was something like the motive power of love. It was Arthur Dimmesdale who gave meaning and point to Chillingworth's life: and when Arthur escaped he had nothing else to live for, his will to live deserted him, and he died. The author, comparing his dissolution to the loss of the will to live that may follow the death of a loved one, not only compares the passions of love and of hate but makes bold to say: "Philosophically considered, therefore, the two passions seem essentially the same, except that one happens to be seen in a celestial radiance, and the other in a dusky and lurid glow."

Or, as Freud and his disciples say, both are the same in the dusk and blindness of the subconsciousness, and in the conscious manifestation of either the other is carried latently but inevitably along.

But let us not take Hawthorne too seriously as a propounder of Freudian doctrine. Rather let us say that by justness of artistic observation he can say empirically what Freud says from many observations generalized. Nor can we take him too seriously as a moralist, being warned indeed by the little breaks, here and here, between our sympathies and his evident expectations of them. Not the breaks in such large matters as that of Puritanism and of Pearl, but in much smaller but just as telltale things: for example, in that emotional passage where Hester, after warning Arthur Dimmesdale that Chillingworth wishes him ill, confesses that Roger was her husband. Arthur Dimmesdale, shocked to his soul's depth by the revelation, upbraids her, not only for the horror of the thing, the ugliness of the exposure of his soul to the man he had wronged, but for the "indelicacy" of it.

Now, no Arthur Dimmesdale, writhing in the pain of such a revelation, would ever think of such a word as "indelicacy". That word was not his at all—it was foisted on him by an author, and an author, at that, not without some of the old maidishness of American Puritanism.

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MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR GENIUS

By Mary Austin

III: THE EDUCATION OF THE WRITER

EDITOR'S NOTE: *We have usually considered genius a gift of the gods, bestowed upon only a chosen few. Mrs. Austin, after years of devoted study, emphatically asserts that genius can be acquired. In a series of four* articles, the first of which appeared in the November* BOOKMAN, *the second in January, she attempts to analyze genius and talent and to point the way both for recognizing them and for utilizing them in life and art.*

SINCE the most educable years of a literary genius are usually over before anybody discovers that he has arrived upon the scene, advice on this point would appear to be superfluous. It is only because so many young people are undertaking to fit themselves for literary careers without waiting for evidence of fitness, or on evidence which is purely interior, or in the belief, largely erroneous, that writing is a pleasant and extremely well paid occupation, that we are obliged to give some attention to educational possibilities.

The creative worker in any field is his own plant, the management and all the works. Anything that formal education can do to make him more valuable to himself is always worth attempting. It is also occasionally necessary to set deliberately about correcting the mistakes made, with the best intentions, by parents and teachers. The capital on which the creative worker adventures is his whole native endowment of health, intelligence, talent, genius, temperament, and information. These do not come into his hand all at once and in a virgin condition. His parents, his social environment, the public school have all fumbled at them; and at any moment during the first ten or twenty years of his adventure, there may arise from within the works totally unsuspected developments, failures of capacity, alterations of the main drive, or the opening of new levels of consciousness demanding new mediums of expression.

Formal education for the writer, therefore, cannot be thought of as compassed within the four years of a college course. It must become a continuing process throughout his life; and the surest intimation that his life as a writer is over would be a cessation of interest in the business of learning things.

The question of the scope of the writer's learning is determined by the quality of intelligence that accompanies his writing gift. One thing the so called intelligence tests have done for us, is to establish the fallacy of the old notion that a genius in any department of life is necessarily a fool in every other. High types of genius in any direction appear to be accompanied by high grades of intelligence. So if you suspect yourself of being

*The series, as originally planned, included only three articles. But the interest aroused by these papers has necessitated fuller development of Mrs. Austin's thesis.

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one of the high types, by all means give yourself every opportunity of acquiring the best intellectual training your generation and your purse afford. Actually there are only two things in the way of formal education that are absolutely indispensable to the literary genius: these are to be able to read and to make marks on paper that other people can read. In order that the second process may be comfortably successful, it is important to realize the relation between it and the first.

Young writers are always asking what they ought to read; while the really important item is *how* they read. Turn the incipient writer loose in a library and he will find his natural fodder as readily as a cat finds catnip. Unfortunately our public schools will not let the child absorb what he needs into the deep-self by natural processes. They ignore the circumstance that every mind has its own rate of absorption, which is directly related to the rate of outgo. There is even a notion prevailing to an astonishing extent among people who ought to know better, that some sort of intrinsic merit attaches to slowness.

Thus the child is encouraged to form a dragging habit of reading in the classroom, without a suspicion that he is establishing an equal drag on his rate of writing. But a more vicious habit inculcated by the schools is that of holding up the business of absorbing the content of the printed page for the sake of wallowing in the associated emotional reactions. Any editor will tell you that the worst difficulty of the beginning writer is to distinguish between what he has actually got onto the paper, and the overtones of his own ego aroused by the process of writing. Much of this difficulty can be traced back to habits acquired in the schoolroom, under the popular impression that there is a special merit in trying to "reflect while you read", or, "feel what you read". The power of inhibiting reactions until the intake is completed is indispensable to the journalist and the descriptive writer; where it has been impaired by wrong habits of reading, it should be deliberately corrected. The greatest efficiency is secured by training yourself to the largest amount of intake natural to your capacity, followed by periods of gestation, and subsequent periods of direct output. Every individual has a natural rhythm of intake, gestation, and output which it is ruinous to violate. The habit of luxuriating in his own reactions to what he may be writing is almost always the sign of the dilettante, to whom writing is merely the excuse for doing that very thing. For all serious writing, the habit of not being able to distinguish clearly between the situation and what is felt about it, is fatal.

The chief advantage of a university education to a writer is that of being able to do a large amount of necessary reading under the best circumstances. Whatever else the university offers by way of incentive and "atmosphere" is problematical. For a career of scholarly writing—essay, editorial, intellectual exposition, and "feature" writing — the older universities are probably the best. But I have a suspicion based upon what I know of successful fictionists in the United States, that the small colleges, where the contacts are more direct and the traditions yet to make, afford a better environment for the incubation of creative gifts.

At any school the youth who already recognizes himself as elected to a literary career should first concern

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himself with his indispensable tool, language. He must learn a little Latin and some Greek, and have a general survey of the sources and development of the English tongue. The question of how much of the classic languages is important, depends on the particular program. For critical writing some acquaintance with the originals of great literature would seem to be essential. This author made the mistake, having come upon the educational scene when the educational value of classic languages was being widely discussed, of deciding that it was better to know one language thoroughly than to have a smattering of two or three. I concentrated on Latin therefore, and neglected Greek. Afterward, in all my thinking my mind kept slipping into a hole in the place where Greek ought to be, so that I was finally obliged to turn back after my writing career had begun, and acquire the "smattering" of that tongue that I had earlier despised.

Students expecting to write usually elect the English courses, which does not seem to be invariably the best thing to do. Young people who have been brought up to think in some language other than English may find a course in English composition helpful, even necessary. But it ought not to be necessary to anyone born to the full English inheritance, especially when you realize that frequently the excerpts selected for class study are drawn from the works of writers who had no teaching other than a reading acquaintance with the best English writers. If there is a particularly inspiring teacher of the history of literature in your school, such a study might well be profitable. But it must be kept in mind that the professional writer's contacts with the best literature must come fresh and fresh, as his expanding outlook calls for them. The crowding of the bulk of literary reading into four years without any immediate relation to the use that is to be made of it, stales the literary perception. Also it frequently sets up permanent incapacities for the appreciation of varieties of literary contacts that, taken at the right time, might prove informative and refreshing. The old practice of parsing "Paradise Lost" and diagraming "Hamlet", which spoiled so many choice pieces of literature for my generation, has happily passed away, but the method which prevails in many universities of reducing all our literary inheritance to the crass appetite of the undergraduate, is not much of an improvement upon it.

There are few universities now that do not also profess to teach the art of producing literature in all its branches. But never by any chance is the art of essay writing taught by a master essayist, nor the short story classes instructed by anybody who would dare resign the post of instructor for a career of short story writing. This means that writing is taught in our universities by people almost totally ignorant of the *interior* phases of composition, and these are the only phases that are really important. I have heard teachers of short story courses, who couldn't write an acceptable short story even by following their own directions, insist that all they try to do is to induct their pupils into a study of story form. Now a critical appreciation of literary form is necessary to the writer, but there is also a grave danger in fixing the attention on form before the matter with which that form is to be filled and made alive has had time to grow. There are certain evolutionary se-

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quences in all creative processes which make it plain that form is always the exteriorization of livingness. To make a mold for your own genius to flow into, in advance of knowing very much or anything at all about what the scope and character of that genius are to be, is to establish limitations from which it may later be impossible to escape.

A year or two ago I found, in a western college where I was lecturing, a young woman professing to teach "A Course in Novel Writing". As I did not recall her name among any list of novelists, I made some inquiry, and finally was asked my opinion of that course by the head of the English department. I was obliged to assert that the best that could be said of it was that it really offered "A Course in the Imitation of Novels as They Have Been Written". This is the most I can say for any such course in creative writing that I have been able to examine. In the majority of them the imitation is wholly from the outside, without one spark of light on the necessary psychological processes of the writer. It seems to me that there is more than coincidence in the contemporary decline of the American short story, and the rise of university instruction in it.

That there might be things learned in classes about the management and development of a creative gift, I should be the last to deny. But the only way in which they could be successfully communicated would be by the writers who have mastered these things by experience, and such information would then have to be adapted to the individual use by time consuming experiments. What one gathers from both student and instructor in such courses as are offered, is that they have arisen in answer to a characteristically American demand for a little bag of literary tricks by which the problem of time and experience can be circumvented. What every writer who has arrived at any degree of literary distinction knows, is that creative power is the evolutionary outgrowth of a deep seated drive of the subjectively coordinated psyche, and for that there is no formula.

The study of editorial and journalistic writing is in somewhat different case. As there is no recognized "form" for these things, the attention is directed to the intellectual processes involved and, in the case of journalism, to the social philosophy of the age, to the psychology of perceiving and realizing "news". It is also important for the prospective journalist to understand something of that vast institution, the press, and some of its sociological and ethical implications. A year or two at a well conducted school of journalism could, therefore, be extremely helpful; but that it is not indispensable, there are many journalists of the first rank able to declare.

And if not writing as it is taught, what then? Certainly science. Scientific information is essential to the modern writer in order that he may make the widest possible contacts with his age. Field and laboratory work in science is the best possible training for the habits of close observation and accurate reporting of things observed, upon which the professional writer must depend. Finally there is the indispensable scientific habit of mind.

Every fiction writer is in some sort a scientist of human behavior. The simplest story cannot be written without observing, noting, comparing, and deducting in the fields of social and personal behavior with precisely the same respect for authenticity that is

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obligatory on the astronomer and the botanist. The fiction field is immensely more complicated, and correspondingly difficult to check up; but over and above the qualities of style and temperament, what writers like Wells and Ibsen have to depend upon is the accuracy and range of their observations. Wells we know underwent years of direct science training. What we really mean by "mid-Victorian", when we use it as a term of opprobriousness, is "unscientific". We mean that writers have scrambled together their conclusions out of their sentiments, prejudices, and predilections rather than by sharp and unrelenting research into human motive. By all means let the young writer follow any particular science for which he has special aptitude. All of the natural sciences are excellent discipline in proportion as they interest us.

The student writer of high creative aims should by no means neglect the study of higher mathematics. Differential calculus is probably unnecessary for the young person whose highest reach is "Classy Films", or "The Saturday Evening Post"—though as a matter of fact most of the writers of that widely circulated journal are university men. But for the poet and the prospective author of the modern *Comédie Humaine* mathematics is the best possible training in the capacity to discern and work with the absolute behind appearances. I never went any higher than calculus myself, and am not prepared to say what one might get out of cones, for instance. But I am convinced by experience that of formal grammar and plane geometry, the latter is immensely the more important study for the imaginative writer. Grammar you can acquire by persistent reading among the best stylists. Geometry must be grappled with by the innermost inner mind from which the best work comes.

This is the final test of whatever in the writer's life comes under the head of education: whether it engages the whole man. It is the test not only of learning acquired from books, but of all that comes by way of experience. A really good school of writing would devote a large part of its curriculum to teaching us how to experience life. The worst of even the best places where the teaching of writing is attempted, is that they concern themselves almost wholly with externalities.

Having selected first the studies that will be helpful in mastering the literary technique, by providing either necessary mental training or information, the next thing for the writer to do is to look about for such studies as will help him to understand his own and other people's experiences.

For this purpose formal psychology, and some of the sciences called social, can be immensely helpful. In every university there ought to be some sort of general course of study which would extract the essence out of ethnology, biology, sociology, and psychology and combine them with a well vertebrated survey of human history, especially designed for students who find it necessary to get some notion of wholeness in respect to the human race. Since any such coordinated study is lacking, the next best thing is to follow your liking in as many authentic directions as you have time for.

Personally I have found the greatest illumination in the study of folk ways. American writers are fortunate in having here at home, and fairly accessible, opportunities to come in direct contact with the first tentative thrust toward art and civilization, in our

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own aborigines. There are some minds, however, so constituted that they cannot come into fruitful contact with any society but their own. Here in the United States, and rather widely characteristic of our intellectuals, there is a certain revulsion against beginnings, almost a terror, not unlike the reaction of those simple religionists whose whole universe is undermined by the admission of the evolution of man from anthropoid ancestry. Where the particular young writer gets his help depends upon whether his natural disposition is toward the evolutionary sources or the inspirational centres of creative activity. If he can write better free verse by believing that that particular form was created in six days by some godlike group of modern French expressionists, than by believing that it is an evolutionary product of the American experience, then let him cleave to his gods. Help is like gold, where you find it. The only possible use in quarreling about inspirational sources is that your faith in your own gods is increased by it. Some kind of fixed belief as to origins or sources of power is as indispensable to the young writer as a twig from which to begin to spin, to a spider.

This brings us naturally to a consideration of the value, to the preparatory years of a literary career, of a sympathetic atmosphere. There is no question that any kind of professional life begins more pleasantly among people of similar and simultaneous interests. There is some practical advantage in the exchange of experience; there is, on the other hand, the danger of narrowing contacts and the too early formation of a professional point of view. When the personal environment of the young writer is too harsh, there is danger of a rasped and outraged attitude toward society. But when we consider the work of a writer like Sir James Barrie, it is easily seen that a beautifully tender and sympathetic background can be as definitely limiting as one conspicuously harsh and cold. In pursuance of these studies I had occasion to ask a great many distinguished people what they knew of the circumstances attending their earliest youth. I discovered that an extraordinary number of them—two novelists of high rank, two players of the highest, a playwright and a prophet—were *unwanted* children. Casting up the youth of a score of writers of the first rank, such as Conrad, Wells, May Sinclair, Jane Austen, E. A. Robinson, Tolstoy, Ibsen, it is easily seen that the rating is all on the side of a certain detachment from the personal environment, mounting even to antagonism. It is fortunate, therefore, that nobody knows how to tell the beginning writer where he can find the sympathetic atmosphere, the desire of which is eating out his heart.

It is more than likely that this craving for communication, this tormenting desire to *tell* is merely the emotional register of the inward drive which is indispensable to all literary success. It is even possible that the satisfaction of this craving is the sign that the utmost mark of capacity is reached, and that growth is arrested at this point. If your literary impulse is the kind that can be satisfied by getting into a literary atmosphere, it probably isn't worth educating.

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GERTRUDE ATHERTON: A PERSONALITY

By Isabel Paterson

SOME years ago I was working on the Woman's Page of a New York paper, and the editor told me to get a symposium on some such topic as "Are Blondes More Dangerous than Brunettes?" or "Pet Dogs and Race Suicide"—the sort of thing that is considered suitable for the female intellect. Among my victims was Mrs. Atherton. She consented amiably to the imposition; she was staying at Long Beach at the time, and I had two hours between trains. We dispatched the pet dogs or what not in about ten minutes. During the rest of the time Mrs. Atherton talked about such matters as really interested her—world politics, feminism, art, Europe, America, men, women, and books. There are authors who fear to waste an epigram or an idea in casual conversation. Mrs. Atherton has plenty to spare. Her intellect is both solid and brilliant, her information almost as extensive as her curiosity (using the word in its proper sense). And her personality, without being aggressive, is so striking and definite that one remembers her very gestures, phrases, and tone for years.

At that time Mrs. Atherton had just returned from Europe, where she had spent the previous decade; but it would have been impossible to mistake her for anything but an American by blood, birth, and mentality. (Although this was at the beginning of the Great War, when few expected it to last longer than six months, she said she had come back to America because the Europe she had known and loved was being destroyed and could never be recreated in her lifetime.) The reading public is familiar with Mrs. Atherton's classic Colonial profile, from photographs. It might have been drawn by Peale or Gilbert Stuart. Her eyes are very blue, her hair pale gold; she is of middle height, and of that erect carriage one associates with an earlier generation which used straight backed chairs as a matter of self respect.

This distinctively American quality is not accident, but direct heritage. On the maternal side Gertrude Franklin Horn Atherton is a collateral descendant of Benjamin Franklin, and all her ancestry is Colonial and Revolutionary. Her grandfather, Stephen Franklin, was bred in New York State, married a girl of his own town, and went to California in middle life, after an interval at Pass Christian, Mississippi. He was just too late to be a pioneer of the "days of gold", but was prominent in the business and political life of San Francisco in its formative period. His daughter was a beauty and a belle of San Francisco society. She married Thomas Lyman Horn, who came to California from Stonington, Connecticut, where the Horn family settled over two hundred years ago. The Horns owned whaling fleets; Thomas Horn's father and grandfather both met a bloody end in mutinies at sea; and Mrs. Atherton herself confesses to a suspicion that "if the annals of the Horns were looked into conscientiously, some of the members

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might be found to have been pirates." They are supposed to have been of French extraction originally; and there is some reason to think they were of the same stock as that of Georges Sand's mother. Thomas Horn also took an active part in the making of San Francisco, and was a member of the second of the famous Vigilance Committees.

Stephen Franklin owned the finest private library in California, and as he took charge of his granddaughter's education, her childhood was spent in a literary and masculine environment. Her bent for writing discovered itself early, and her grandfather encouraged it. "I was the prize composition scholar in school, and all the rest of it", to quote her own words. In her teens she paralleled Fanny Burney and "Evelina" by publishing anonymously a story which set her little world by the ears. It was called "The Randolphs of Redwoods", but the title was about the only Victorian touch. Mrs. Atherton repolished it afterward into "A Daughter of the Vine". It is a brilliant and slightly morbid tale, of a girl whose mother is a dipsomaniac and insanely jealous of her husband's affection for the child. The mother therefore secretly implants in her daughter her own vice. The girl struggles against it for a time, but under pressure of a tragic love episode she yields and lets her life go to the ruin her mother had prepared for her. The story was taken largely from life, and the principals in it were easily recognized. When it came out in the San Francisco "Argonaut", Mrs. Atherton relates, "I was the only person never suspected of the authorship, and everybody else who had ever written for publication was cut. When I acknowledged it I fancy people were still more furious at having been taken in. One or two never spoke to me again."

This interesting beginning was interrupted for a time by marriage. George Bowen Atherton was the son of a New Englander and a Chilean lady of pure Spanish blood, and had been reared largely in a Spanish atmosphere. He disapproved entirely of his young wife's ambition. It was unfeminine; Spanish ladies did not write. The bride yielded for a time; moreover, her attention was engrossed by a baby. But destiny was not to be thwarted. Mr. Atherton died within five years. The youthful widow fled to New York—later to Europe—and took up her career immediately and definitely, with the added advantage of an enlarged experience.

She confesses it took her four years to get her first novel published. It is out of print now—"and I never shall resurrect it", the author says. The theme was reincarnation, and the topic had not yet become popular. It is characteristic of a young writer to go far afield for a subject, and of Mrs. Atherton to be in advance of her times. But after this she turned back to California, on which New York probably supplied the needed perspective. She went home and sought out all the old ladies who still survived from the days of the dons and caballeros, and heard from their own lips the true tales of Spanish California; just in time, for these last survivors were mostly verging on eighty. Something of the Spanish flavor of old California Mrs. Atherton had of course imbibed in her childhood; and from this rich store of material she distilled two dozen or more gorgeously romantic and dramatic short stories, to be found now in her two volumes, "Before the Gringo Came" and "The Splendid Idle Forties". There is a remarkable sim-

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ilarity in the basic plot of one of these, "The Pearls of Loreto", and the opera, "The Jewels of the Madonna", which is of a later date.

It is noteworthy that there was never the least trace of sentimentalism, supposedly a feminine characteristic, in Mrs. Atherton's work. Yet the literary flavor of the day of her beginnings was extremely sirupy in general; even Bret Harte sentimentalized over his whiskered miners and rustic beauties. Mrs. Atherton says that of her early reading the books which most influenced her were Taine's "History of English Literature" and the works of Herbert Spencer, and one can well believe it. There is a clarity and precision about her style at its best which is almost cold; though most of her novels have an emotional motif, she paints passion in a north light. It is the natural fusion of roving and adventurous blood, a vigorous and courageous mind, and an austerely classical training (Mrs. Atherton's grandfather intended her to adorn the pages of "The Atlantic".) Moreover, Ambrose Bierce was one of her early friends and preceptors.

This intellectual quality has always antagonized the critics, most of them being men; for while in actual contact men do like "clever women", they are intensely repelled by them in theory. And all Mrs. Atherton's heroines are women of strong independent character; not one is a clinging vine or a weeping willow. Bernard Shaw has remarked that no man could read the journal of Marie Bashkirtseff without disliking her. While she lived Marie was greatly admired by the opposite sex, but in her Journal she revealed the fact that she had always thought for herself—and of herself—and men cannot endure this flouting of their superiority in cold print. So from the very beginning Mrs. Atherton aroused much critical animus, greatly to her astonishment, for she has been always accustomed to live in the world of ideas, and ideas have no sex.

Even now there is no woman writer in America who provokes such a diversity of opinion as Gertrude Atherton. Once a year at least she is hailed as the greatest, and quite as often she is "demoted" by the opposition. Nobody disputes about a dead issue or a dead author. After their generation has passed they are placed and fixed, "there take their station and their degree", to suffer no further change save by the slow dimming of time or the petrifaction of scholarship. When a live author is accorded this chill respect, it is safe to guess that the reason is his total negligibility. Nonentities are always treated to polite platitudes, but a personality challenges attention to the point of hostility. Even Mrs. Atherton's technique is a bone of contention. It is enlightening to read her own explanation of it. She quotes Herbert Spencer as saying that a style applied uniformly to every mood and phase of a story is a sign of timidity and poverty of resource. Her own taste in reading is for a pure and restrained style, but she feels such uniformity would not express her personality; hence the unevenness and variety of her method. Thus Rousseau deliberately decided to write his "Confessions" in a style and tempo which should vary to fit the changing demands of the narrative. His decision, and his success in putting it into effect, went far toward remolding the French language. Mrs. Atherton undoubtedly was one of the influences in American literature which helped to break the dry and formal pattern set by the New England authors as the only acceptable standard. Also, like

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Rousseau, she took whatever was nearest and most alive to her for material, even to the extent of using the sacred Brahmin caste of writers themselves for "copy", in "The Aristocrats". I suppose this impious act did not help to appease the critics, but it furnishes one of the liveliest and most entertaining novels about novelists that was ever written.

Taine also gave Mrs. Atherton her formula for plot and character—that is, he had defined it, for a writer can take only the advice which fits his natural bent. "Taine says that the mission of art in fiction as a creative force is to give certain types of character the opportunities they lack in real life. Millions plod and fret through life the hopeless victims of circumstance. Create for these people conditions that will develop their latent possibilities for good or evil, for high adventure or immolation in a great cause, for love or hate. This constitutes the difference between photography and art."

Her style undoubtedly has the defects of its qualities. When inspired by a great subject, such as Alexander Hamilton, she writes with a vigor and color that cannot be too highly praised. "The Conqueror" is altogether admirable. The dry bones of history are reclothed with flesh. Even the Father of his Country is made to get down from his granite pedestal and walk about as a living man. (Betsy Schuyler Hamilton's description of herself dancing a minuet with him—"I felt like a little polar cub trotting out to sea with an iceberg"—is not only deliciously humorous, it illustrates the qualities in Washington which ultimately doomed him to his pedestal.) On the other hand, when chance sends her a trivial theme and small people, as in "The Avalanche", Mrs. Atherton writes hurriedly and indifferently. There is scarce a line in it above the level of journalism, nor a character one remembers, unless it be the snapshot of San Francisco's Leader of Society.

Another striking contrast may be found in "The Californians", which I esteem as a piece of Mrs. Atherton's best work, and "The Sisters-in-Law", one of her latest books. The story of Magdalena Yorba is one of inner development and the conflict of the soul with its environment. The style throughout is even and restrained; the texture of mood and narrative is closely knit; and the double climax, of her father's suicide and Magdalena's release from her spirit's prison, is presented with a quietness that leaves the events to speak for themselves. But Magdalena's life was fixed and ordered for her; she could only struggle dumbly. Even when she would have stabbed her false friend, the lovely Helena Belmont who had stolen her lover, it was without an uttered reproach or outcry.

On the other hand "The Sisters-in-Law" deals with a period of flux and violence, of changing manners and tottering morals, beginning as it does with the San Francisco earthquake and ending with the Great War, on the very battlefield. The narrative therefore has a broken and uneven effect, and the style frequently lacks elegance. Also the juxtaposition of the trivial and the tragic (which in itself is true to life) is sometimes so abrupt that the sense of proportion appears to be lost by author as well as by characters (which latter also would be true enough). It seems incredible, for instance, that the young English hero, Gathbroke, while watching over the dead body of his beloved sister, in the midst of an earthquake, should con-

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verse calmly with a strange girl on what constitutes an aristocracy, nicely analyzing the English and American viewpoints. It is not so much the subject as the *tone* of the speakers which seems unreal. People may and do talk about any irrelevancy in the face of death and disaster, but hardly with such complete self possession—even if they are English! But all the characters seem to be mildly obsessed with the same subject. One might imagine a Freudian diagnosing them as afflicted with an inferiority complex, which would certainly irritate them to the last degree.

In a previous novel, "Ancestors", this freedom of treatment works out more happily. The mass of detail and occasional divergences from the main theme only serve to broaden and enrich the picture.

"Black Oxen" shows Mrs. Atherton at her worst and best. It cannot possibly outlive its hour, but there is no room for wonder why it sprang at once into the best selling ranks. One so alert and sure in grasping the latest novelty and turning it to instant use for her own purpose could never fail of success. Yet such a hybrid product of a scientific theory and a romantic temperament, set in a bleakly unkind atmosphere, could not but be gravely deficient in æsthetic value; the very swiftness and technical competence which went to the making of it undid it as a work of art. At last Mrs. Atherton's versatility has got the upper hand of her artistic conscience, after a drawn battle over half a lifetime.

But the unpardonable sin for a novelist is to be uninteresting. Of this Mrs. Atherton is innocent. Her very failings furnish food for thought, and it is a zestful occupation to criticize her. Whether or not her books survive in any other way, they will be invaluable to the student of our manners in time to come; her personal bias is always so evident as to be easily discounted. But for her old California had been irretrievably sunk beneath the waters of oblivion. Her novels cover more than a hundred years of its social history, beginning with "Rezanov", a tale of 1806, and perhaps not yet ended with "The Sisters-in-Law" and 1918. "The Californians", "Patience Sparhawk", "American Wives and English Husbands", "The Traveling Thirds", "Ancestors", and "The Avalanche" fill the intervening century. She has also written a very readable "History of California", and a pageant. In addition she has to her credit "Senator North", "Rulers of Kings", "The Gorgeous Isle", "Tower of Ivory", "Julia France", and "The Living Present", with scenes set in America, Austria, the West Indies, Germany, and France, all from first hand knowledge.

No doubt the curious cleavage between Mrs. Atherton's gifts as a writer and her private opinions has been detrimental to her work, but what the world has lost she has gained. And why should any writer feel obligated to make a burnt offering of his life to the public, by putting all his vitality in his books? Mrs. Atherton really belongs, temperamentally, to the eighteenth century, which was so rich in talented dilettantes, and took pride in tossing off its literary gems as mere elegant diversion. She has not consciously done that, but she has always been herself first and an author afterward. She writes as a lady; those who mistake her attitude for that of the social *soupirant* or snob are simply unacquainted with the tone of society when society was a solid fact, with fixed boundaries and a definite current value.

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She has never been primarily an artist, but an active personality. Her ivory tower has a large window looking on Main Street, where the parades go by. Anatole France has imagined the shade of Archimedes gravely demonstrating a problem while a number of little devils endeavor to torment him, without avail, for he is too rapt in contemplation of his theorem. Mrs. Atherton's ghost would be interviewing the little devils and investigating the social structure of Hades. She is not detached; her intelligence is frankly the servant of her emotions and prejudices. She rides her mental hobbies vigorously, in whatever direction she chooses, sometimes far across the boundaries of consistency. She finds no difficulty in detesting the Germans and admiring the Nordics simultaneously, though if there is any such creature as a Nordic, a German surely must come under that classification. Moreover, the whole theory of Nordic superiority was sprung on an astonished world by Houston Stewart Chamberlain, Germany's panegyrist, to be watered down later by Madison Grant. So also is Mrs. Atherton proud of her descent from Benjamin Franklin, and yet never weary of proclaiming her belief in aristocracy. She is, in short, a romantic, and can always remold the world of facts to her heart's desire at pleasure. Hers is not what is idiotically labeled feminine lack of logic. It is exactly the same kind of logic that men have always found so useful in attaining their personal ends, the logic which can find a reason of some sort to justify any predilection whatever. On reading over the above, it occurs to me that I have been saying only that Mrs. Atherton is human. Let it go at that.

FLAGS FLYING

By Genevieve Taggard

FEAR not, my heart, to wear yourself away.
No outward enemy, nor inner grief,
Nor love, nor loss—no bitterest belief
Can spoil your silver spring. Cowardice may. . .
That heavy weight of terror, day by day,
Will rob and snare you worse than any thief,
And all your span of beauty will be brief,
Your strength asunder, and your dreams astray.

Hold fast to life. In her is no ill bred.
Rude life will keep you waiting and awake:
Hers is no festered soul, no ease will make
A soporific pillow for your head.

Then safety's yours; but not for safety's sake
Have you gone down in struggle to the dead.

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THE LONDONER

Paragraphists, Portraits, and Caricatures---Sensitiveness to Criticism---"The Pitiful Wife"---"Riceyman Steps"---Caslon Type---Sir Chartres Biron---The Oxford Jane Austen.

LONDON, *January* 1, 1924.

I HAVE a vicarious grievance. It is not a very serious one, and it does not greatly concern anybody except my literary friends; but some of these friends and their friends are agitated about the matter. Writers in England, and of course in America, suffer from two ghastly tortures. The tortures are the personal paragraph and the photograph, to which may be added the caricature. The personal paragraph is one of the most unscrupulous of all things, and I will tell the story of one of them. There appeared one day in one of our daily newspapers a paragraph which read something like this:

> Pale blue spats are becoming popular among our more æsthetic writers. I saw Wilminton Wackers last week at Deauville wearing a pair.

Now Wilminton Wackers (of course that is not his real name) was subjected to much teasing about his latest exploit. At last a woman friend of his met the writer of the paragraph. "I say," said she, "what on earth did you mean by saying you had seen Wilminton Wackers at Deauville wearing pale blue spats? He's never been to Deauville in his life; and he's never worn pale blue spats." "Oh," was the answer, "I don't know. His name *just came into my head.*"

And again, some time ago a friend —could he really be called a friend?— sent me a cutting from an American paper which stated, "Simon Pure once said that George Meredith was only an old washpot." Of course I had never said anything of the kind; and I suppose my name had "just come into the writer's head". And so for life I am to be saddled (if it pleases anybody to remember the sparkling phrase) with the opinion that George Meredith was only an old washpot. Could anything be more grievous? To bear the onus not only of one's real indiscretions and careless phrases, but also of those which come into other people's heads and are unscrupulously fastened upon one's self! I wonder what sort of head conceives such bright notions: it needs cuffing.

The portrait is another aspect of this question. We all know that we cannot altogether govern our own looks. Still less can we govern the camera, which, if it cannot lie, does at times get precious near monstrous invention. Nor can we control the photographer's meddling fingers, which "touch up" our portraits with a mechanical skill and devilishness unmatched in any other craft. The other day it happened that a press reproduction of the photograph of a distinguished writer was seen by another man. The man said: "By Jove, that's a criminal type!" The poor writer is the most innocent of men, but never mind that. Some ghastly travesty of his features goes into the press, looking like nothing on earth. He is pil-

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loried for a day, as the man with the wicked face. To these horrors has now been added the pencil sketch or caricature. The caricature is perhaps the worst of the lot, not because it is malicious (it is not), but because in general it is made by somebody who has never seen his subject, who works from a photograph, which he must not copy too closely lest he infringe the photographer's copyright, and who is misled by a shadow or a high light into attributing to the person drawn some features which do not appear in the original at all. He exaggerates the features. A horrible looking mess, between an old clo' man and a grampus, appears in the paper. Beneath this abortion is the legend

MR. WILMINTON WACKERS.

Now, what I want to know is, has the victim no redress through the law of libel? Could it not be shown that he had suffered severely from damage done to his reputation by the appearance of the disgusting paragraphs and portraits and caricatures? I know that many authors look upon any mention of themselves, or drawing or photograph of themselves, in any paper as so much valuable publicity; but I am no friend to such authors. They belong to the commoner kind, and their rewards, if immediate, are of a variety not worth having.

The whole question of publicity is one as to which I am in grave doubt. Its uses are I am sure exaggerated. I admit that the author is a vain person, who would rather be slanged than ignored; but this is for work done. It affects printed criticism only—or that criticism more valuable than anything that appears in print, which is by word of mouth. The question is very different when we come to the untrue paragraph. The paragraph is not written in order to bring the author fame; it is merely visible testimony of his already existing fame. It is possible for ambitious people to squeeze their portraits or paragraphs concerning themselves into printed columns of fashionable gossip, but nobody except themselves notices the presence of their names or their portraits. I have known cases of this sort. Never once has any good resulted from the exploit, because there can be no memory without association of ideas. A rootless photograph or paragraph, so to speak, is also entirely bootless. In general, such gossiping paragraphs are written because the writers believe that readers of their paper wish to hear about the celebrities described. Therefore, the puff of the known writer has no more value than has the advertising of goods already widely popular. It was once suggested that a well known soap which for one year ceased to advertise noticed a marked decline in its sales during that period; but why one should read an author's books because of gossip about his spats or his neckties or his foibles I cannot imagine. Rather, one would think, one gossips about him because one has read his books.

I proceed to the portraits and caricatures — they are in reality the same, since few portraits are other than caricatures. Here, failing great beauty in the author, the justification can lie only in the fact that readers wish to know what the author is like. A drawing like a gargoyle cannot possibly meet the case. It does not decorate the page of the paper in which it appears; it is not like the author; and it is thus neither informative nor edifying. What purpose does it serve? Solely the purpose of giving a bad living to a bad artist? And again, has not the author some redress for the loss of readers who are prejudiced

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against his work by the travesty of his features which has been printed? It appears, not. The author, being a minor celebrity, has to submit to the indignities of the press paragraphist, photographer, and draftsman. If it be objected that he need not so submit, or that he is to be congratulated rather than pitied, as are those who complain of having to pay supertax in its highest form, my reply is that the author has no choice, since paragraphists and draftsmen do their fell work without reference to the author or his interests. He is their sport, their prey. He is the little flea upon whose back are smaller fleas, and so ad infinitum. The only course is for the author to smile philosophically, and think to himself how obvious is his celebrity, since men and women are being paid to present things true and untrue about him to a suffering multitude—I should have said, perhaps, a suffering and inquisitive and admiring multitude. Is this sort of inconvenience any more troublesome than the anxiety of tax gatherers to draw the last cent from his income, or of publishers to extract him from the jaws of other publishers? Perhaps all these things are tributes. And yet they are tributes which, I have no doubt, many of the better authors would rather forego. If they submit to the indignities, it is because it is less undignified to submit than to complain. But perhaps it is worth while to appeal to the lurking decency of gossipers, and to say: "Please tell only that which you believe to be true." And to the caricaturists: "Please consider whether you are quite justified in following a career of art when there are so many other ways of earning a living." Mild appeals such as these will have no effect, and all I have said is useless in its immediate prospects of results; but at least I have made the protest, and some readers may in time feel that it is not all self advertisement to be an author who is written about and caricatured. Most often, no doubt, the presence of his name in a paragraph is due to the fact that "it *just came into my head*".

* * * *

Primarily, of course, what the author, or indeed any other person, objects to in printed references to himself is untruth. And yet papers are seething with untruth upon the most obvious matters of fact. Politicians are probably the most sinned against in this respect, and authors other than politicians are generally most misrepresented when they essay the elucidation of a controversial topic. There is some curious blurring of the human mind when it comes up against something controversial. It immediately seeks to insult and to distort the mind to which it is instinctively opposed. Truth is of no account, even in the minds of normally scrupulous persons. Out plumps the lie, the inexactitude, the fevered attempt to show that the opponent is a scamp as well as a fool. How hard it is not to distort! Every writer comes up against this hostility in certain reviewers. He may write sincerely, and they may write sincerely; but their description of what he has done is false, and his description of their motives is equally false. It is an instance of the impossibility of peace. Much more, every speaker is up against the incapacity of each member of his audience to understand the meaning of plain words once there has arisen any difference of opinion between speaker and audience. Most of all, the discrepancy is to be observed between the word originally spoken and the word as it is

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interpreted by those who have to write leading articles rebuking the original speaker for saying what he never said and did not intend to say. No doubt politicians get used to this more dignified and damaging form of heckling, just as writers become accustomed to reviews, enthusiastic and otherwise, until it is sometimes a matter of difficulty to distinguish between them. Such veteran politicians and authors can even appreciate the skill of their opponents, and reply with similar fireworks to the first comments. Communities, such as nations, or large firms seeking a monopoly, are much more sensitive than individuals to criticism. They have no more the will to change than has the individual. But they have greater dread and indignation in face of criticism; and their replies to it will immediately occur to readers of these words. They are sensitive, no doubt, because they are vulnerable. The politician and the author both know that hard words break no bones, and that they can be returned, as boys in battle return their enemies' ammunition, with gusto. Companies, on the other hand, cannot carry the war back again, but must suffer a blow or defend themselves if necessary in a law court. For one adverse critic, the politician or the author finds at least another supporter. He can comfort himself, if he needs comfort, with one opinion against another. Indeed, one of the most pathetically amusing sights I know is to see an author triumphantly setting a good review against a bad one. He is, perhaps, confessedly by this action a young and still sensitive author; but the instinct is sound. At length it works mechanically, so that reviews, whether good or bad, tend to be meaningless. For the politician the need for reply is different. He is the man for battle, since battle is a part of his occupation. But for the firm or the state there is as yet no issue but reprisals and eventually war. Strange that congregations of men should be so much less sage than individual men. This fact is used by those who argue against democracy as a form of government; and no doubt the argument is as sincere and as unsound as any other, ready to be combatted by the sensitive democrats all over the world.

* * * *

Something of an innovation has arisen in the last season of book publishing. I mentioned the other month that a novel called "The Pitiful Wife" was getting well reviewed here. So, at least, it appeared to me. But apparently I was wrong, for the publishers of that book have issued in their house organ a protest, much advertised, against the "cruel criticism" to which the book has been subjected. Reviews which I did not see, evidently, must have been less favorable than those which attracted my attention. No doubt the protest has had some result, as I observe that "The Pitiful Wife" is advertised as being in its third impression; but whether the reputation of the author has been increased by the protest I should question. In the long run, it may fairly be assumed that English reviewers are far too kind to attack any writer whom they believe likely to be damaged by adverse reviews. To the beginner, or to the unsuccessful writer, reviewers are almost invariably kind. A bad press is in its own way a testimony to the reputation for success which an author enjoys. Thus, the three novelists who have of late years received the worst treatment at the hands of reviewers are without question Arnold Bennett, Compton Mackenzie, and H.

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G. Wells, all of whom are known to be, in the matter of sales, impervious to attack. Whatever these writers produce will infallibly be read, whatever the papers say about them. And presently there comes to each a day when the reviewers feel contrite, or when they feel able to praise without reserve, or when that curious wave of loyalty sweeps over them which leads to such a triumph of enthusiasm as accompanied the publication of Mr. Conrad's "Chance". "Chance", it seems to me, was nothing like such a good book as some of its predecessors. Nevertheless, it was acclaimed as no other book by Mr. Conrad had ever been acclaimed. Mr. Wells tasted some of the old enthusiasm when he wrote "Men Like Gods"; Mr. Mackenzie swam again into the reviewers' hearts with "The Altar Steps", only to lose ground with its recently published sequel, "The Parson's Progress"; while Mr. Bennett has had such a press for his new novel, "Riceyman Steps", as must have staggered him. What a change from the blows, the whips and scorpions, the slings and arrows of other books, to the honey and cheers which have greeted "Riceyman Steps". Reviewers have tumbled over each other (with the exception of the "Times Literary Supplement", for which nothing but "really nice" books seem nowadays to have any charms) in calling Mr. Bennett the genius of our day, in proclaiming admiration for his art, his style, his profound understanding of life, and so forth. It is a welcome change. For it cannot be too often remarked that, whatever their faults, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Wells are preeminently the geniuses of our day. To call them names, which is a favorite critical pastime, is of no avail. Truth will out, as the "Daily Mail" used to say before it began taking its hat off to France. The fact remains that, whatever the pretty gifts of younger writers who capture the coteries, Mr. Bennett and Mr. Wells offer still to the present generation the spectacle of unrivaled creative powers. In a day when so much decorative writing is being overpraised and lionized, it is good to remember that it is not for decoration that the best novelists continue to be read and admired. The power to create, to be original, which no merely brilliant and accomplished person can command from his derived and pampered talent, is in the long run the only gift that makes for permanence. The younger generation, with all its wit and skill, has yet to produce a single truly creative writer. For so long as this is its reproach, for so long will the members of the latest age run to brains and satire; and for exactly so long will it be writing solely for its own intellectually inbred contemporaries.

* * * *

The death of S. H. Caslon has not been so widely noticed as I should have expected. It is true that Mr. Caslon was only the latter day representative of the famous firm founded in 1720, but the types invented by William Caslon are so much in vogue at the present time that I should have expected to find much more attention given to the life and death of his descendant. Apart from a period of fifty or sixty years round about the end of the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century, what is known as Caslon old face type has been practically supreme for two hundred years. It has yet, in my opinion, to be superseded. Other types have beauties, and one can admire them and love them—in moderation, or for a time. But in the end, judging by my own experience, one comes back

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to Caslon. It is the only type that has no annoying peculiarity. It is not constrained or precious; one is not pulled up by distaste for a particular letter or comma, by unsuitable lightness or heaviness according as the page be wide or deep or large or small. For every style of page, Caslon type has its own suitability. It is always distinguished and never irritating. It has elegance and beauty. No type that I know is so easy to handle effectively, whether for book work or display. Practically speaking, it makes its own effects: all the designer has to do is to let the type speak for itself. I was surprised to learn that Caslon started life as an engraver of gun barrels and a bookbinder's tool cutter; but the transition to type cutting is quite a simple one, and at some time before his thirtieth year Caslon began this work in earnest. He based his design to some extent upon Dutch models, but he far surpassed his models. It is one of the most excellent things I have heard about that singular dilettante, Horace Walpole, that he recognized the virtue of Caslon's type and made purchases of it for the Strawberry Hill press. It was in this type that he began to set his own works.

* * * *

Among the season's announcements I observe a book called "Pious Opinions" by Sir Chartres Biron, the Bow Street magistrate. I do not know what sort of book this is, but it should be full of interest. Sir Chartres Biron, besides being a magistrate of distinguished ability (it was before him that the first stages of the great Bottomley débâcle had their sinister beginning, when at last the man who had escaped the law for so many years was cornered), is a familiar figure at the Garrick Club and among the members of various famous literary societies, such as the Johnson Club. He is an excellent speaker; although he has his off evenings, as every after dinner speaker is bound to do, I have heard him brilliant, and he is never dull. Speaking of this sort is not the easiest form of recreation. One is very much affected by one's audience, as also by the subjects prescribed by the occasion. The first time I ever heard Sir Chartres Biron was at the Omar Khayyam Club, where there is in fact a good deal of freedom allowed speakers in the matter of adherence to the subject of Omar. In such an easy atmosphere, to my astonishment, the Chief Magistrate at Bow Street was the wittiest of light entertainers. And so I received my first lesson in the recreation of grave men. It stands to reason that whoever sits day after day listening to the most sordid trials, and administering justice to sinners and publicans, must relax or die. Dying means misery, for it is not by the cessation of physical life that men perish but by absorption in the daily task, whereby their spirits flag and their souls wither. Sir Chartres Biron has a better way. He has wide interests, which take him far from the atmosphere of the police court. And some of these interests, no doubt, will be illustrated in "Pious Opinions". He is not the only man of his profession to turn to letters, for in England there are many others. The most famous of them is probably Judge Parry, who is the author of successful farces. Mr. Cancellor, another magistrate, at the Thames Police Court, has also literary leanings, but Mr. Cancellor does not acknowledge his own works. He uses a pseudonym, under which he is able to write vigorous stories of the turf. There must, indeed, be a natural conjunction be-

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tween the Bar and literature, for it would be extremely difficult to count the number of men trained for the Bar who have ultimately deserted it for the profession of letters. Among novelists alone the list is a heavy one.

* * * *

A barrister who has an uncontrollable love for literature, Frank MacKinnon, K.C., must be feeling proud at this moment; for the new edition of Jane Austen, published by the Clarendon Press, is at last on the market. Mr. MacKinnon is not the editor of this edition, which has been supervised by R. W. Chapman; but Mr. Chapman makes handsome acknowledgment of the continuous help he has had from Mr. MacKinnon in preparing the edition, and I know that Mr. MacKinnon has for months past been absorbed in this fascinating hobby horse. It is a fine monument for the Austen lover; and if there is anybody nowadays who is not an Austen lover he should correct the deficiency in his loves with all possible speed. This new edition will unquestionably be the standard edition, and it is the one which all experts should possess. It is not only elaborately annotated, but it has the great advantage of containing many delicious illustrations—not, as is usual in illustrated editions, the sophisticated depiction of scenes from the novels by an artist who knows no more of the spirit of Jane Austen than does a turtle dove, but reproductions of costumes and settings definitely of Jane Austen's period. The value of these illustrations could hardly be exaggerated to the student of the novels. They will not interfere with his pleasure, as do the majority of illustrations to novels, but will stimulate and divert him upon their own account, while at the same time they form the best possible work of reference to have at hand while the novels are being read. If we must have illustrations, these are the only possible and tolerable ones for Jane Austen. But on the other hand, if illustrations are not desired, and if annotations seem to be superfluous, there is always the charming new edition published by Martin Secker, which includes "Lady Susan" and "The Watsons" (omitted from the Oxford edition). This edition, which is in seven small octavo volumes, and is imported into America by Moffat, Yard, will serve for readers who have light purses and who like pretty books and (rare thing in editions of Jane Austen) large type. It is to my mind quite the most charming edition for ordinary readers at present in existence. Its beautiful light paper, and small square page, make a volume both easy to hold in the hand and a delight to the eye. That is why I commend the Adelphi edition, newly completed. But whatever edition is read is immaterial, so long as the reading occurs. For Jane Austen gives pictures of the England that Americans most like. Her books are quiet and tranquil portrayals of restricted country life as it was a hundred years ago. They are written with incomparable delicacy and grace. They are written by a novelist wiser in certain ways than any other novelist that has ever lived—a novelist of rare taste and the most attractive irony. When I want to be at peace, and in entire happiness, I read a book of Jane Austen's. Verily, I believe I will now take up one of them (and I know which one), and bring to an end these urgings to others to share my delight. It is the best commendation, and for myself it is the best tonic I know.

SIMON PURE

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THE LITERARY SPOTLIGHT

XXVII: HENRY BLAKE FULLER

With a Caricature by William Gropper

IN a brilliant sentence wherein he gives us the character and temperament of the hero of his "Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani" Henry Blake Fuller also thus partly describes himself: "He was sufficient unto himself, exempt from the burdens of wealth, the chafings of domestic relations, the chains of affairs, the martyrdom of great ambition and the dwarfing provincialism that comes from a settled home."

So sufficient is he unto himself that it is only with the greatest difficulty that one can unearth anything about him. Those who have known him for a great number of years as intimately as Mr. Fuller can be known, can tell you very little except that he is a charming gentleman. He is exempt from the burdens of wealth, though he has an income from some property in Chicago which suffices amply for his needs. Far from being chafed by domestic relations, he hasn't even a permanent residence. His address is set down in "Who's Who" simply as "Chicago". He is constantly changing his lodgings, whose location he keeps not only from acquaintances he would avoid but from his closest associates. He receives his mail ordinarily at the office of "Poetry: A Magazine of Verse". That he does not suffer the martyrdom of great ambition is evidenced by the dilettante character of his whole career. He spent a great part of his youth abroad and seems rather to have yearned wistfully for Italy all his life. That he is utterly lacking in the provincialism that comes from a settled home is perhaps one reason why his excellent novels shoot over the hearts and heads of the public: he is in life but not of it, and that aloofness of the author which gives so great an air of artistic detachment to his work is, in the last analysis, the elusiveness of personality in a man whose zest is very tepid.

It is all very well to declaim bitterly against the general reader's neglect of an artist, but it is an eminently sensible procedure now and then to take pains to discover to what extent the artist himself is responsible for this neglect. Mr. Fuller's first great literary master, Stendhal, is hard put to it even at this late day to muster that handful of appreciative readers who, he said, would not only understand his work but would cherish it as being unique. Irony and satire, especially if they are refined over subtly, have never a general appeal; and the irony and satire of Mr. Fuller's novels are not ensanguined by any passion whatever. Stendhal, literary caviar as he is, had animated and driving emotions: he worshiped Napoleon, and his Julien Sorel is the first great avatar of the Nietzschean superman. Mr. Fuller has, apparently, not even any inclinations, to say nothing of worship, concerning any person or thing. There is no palpable idea in his work; there

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is only a pervading and gentlemanly diffidence. And diffidence is the last thing in the world to excite the general reader. What it all comes down to, I am afraid, is that Mr. Fuller is deficient in vitality, that vitality which makes pages glow with human warmth and animates the reader with sympathy or distaste. Critics will never quarrel over Mr. Fuller's merits; they will either acknowledge them without passion or remain indifferent to them. And the public, I suspect, will continue to exist in happy ignorance of the dozen books with which he has honored American literature.

Within the last year I have observed a phenomenon which gives credence to my impression that Mr. Fuller's shyness and self isolation is that of a disappointed man. He has begun of a sudden to appear as a prolific reviewer; his analyses and estimates of books appear simultaneously in a half dozen publications; at sixty four years of age he seems to have decided belatedly to impress his name, if only by repetition, upon the minds of American readers. Throughout his career as a writer he has been an occasional contributor of reviews and papers to the literary magazines; but these appearances were so few and far between that the cumulative effect was never great enough to keep an audience aware of his existence. Every once in a while he would be referred to by some critic as the "late H. B. Fuller": and his achievements were somehow thought of as belonging to the last century, even though his last novel, "Bertram Cope's Year", was published as late as 1919.

I believe that if Mr. Fuller had had his present urge to be useful in the literary scene when he was a younger man he would not only have been much better known as a writer but would have endowed his novels with just that animation which they lack. He had no need ever to struggle for a living; he prepared himself for a profession only in a dilettante way by studying music and architecture and wrote his first novel without any bread and butter urgency. He has never held any job except that as an honorary advisory editor of "Poetry: A Magazine of Verse". In this capacity, Harriet Monroe tells me, he is faithful, punctual, and efficient: he is at his desk several mornings out of a week, reading poetry in manuscript, dictating letters of rejection, discussing with the other editors the verse which is to be used in the forthcoming issue of the magazine. But this again is a sort of make believe employment; there is no suggestion of professionalism in his editing, his journalism, his criticism, or, indeed, in his fiction making. He has had, in fine, no real work to do in his life. Possessed, like his Chevalier, of a temperament opposed to all restrictions upon his freedom, scouting the obligations imposed by great ambition, domestic life, augmented wealth, and a permanent home, he practically cut himself free from life altogether. He has not even had his Chevalier's flair for adventurous activity. His career in the flesh no less than in fiction seems to be characterized entirely by an austerely passionless curiosity.

In person Mr. Fuller is a furtive little fellow with a neatly trimmed white beard and white hair; his skin is smooth and white; his voice is soft and hesitant; his eyes gleam with amused inquisitiveness; and he is always perfectly shod and tailored. He is neat, gracious, charming, excessively quiet. At any gathering, at tea or dinner, he never takes part in general discussion; at best, if he says anything, it is to one or two people whom he has with-

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Henry B. Fuller

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drawn or who have withdrawn him into a corner. He chuckles, rather one suspects from nervousness and shyness than from actual mirth; he chuckles a great deal when there is nothing particularly to chuckle about. In any discussion he is much more concerned with drawing out the other fellow than with expressing any opinion himself. When he does express an opinion orally he circumscribes it with reservations and puts it forth, as it were, tentatively, as though ready to withdraw it on second thought.

He is deeply interested in young people, and for a bachelor and recluse he has an extraordinary habit of keeping in touch with the children and grandchildren of his friends. If there is a boy or girl in the family of his circle of acquaintances who is being graduated at high school or college, Mr. Fuller somehow learns of it and, on graduation night, is always to be found in the first row, beaming in a sort of proprietary or parental pride. He follows the activities of the literary youngsters with a sympathy and understanding which is unusual among men past middle age. He has, so far as I know, never uttered a deprecatory, admonitory, or shocked word against the younger generation. So alive is he to what is being done by the younger men that not long ago he wrote a highly appreciative article pointing out the peculiar merits of a dozen or so of the most eccentric and revolutionary of the young modern poets.

II

Mr. Fuller's first novel, "The Chevalier of Pensieri-Vani", was written as long ago as 1886. It did not find a publisher until 1890, when it came out anonymously. When the second edition of the book was issued he attached his name to it. A year later appeared his "Chatelaine of La Trinité", which, like the first novel, was a romantic comedy, with a touch of the gentlest raillery, the scene laid in Italy. In his next two novels, "The Cliff Dwellers" (1893) and "With the Procession" (1895), he took up the realistic manner and applied it to stories of contemporary life in Chicago. In these books no less than in his earlier ones, however, a tincture of Stendhalian irony, heightened perhaps by Mr. Fuller's instinctive repugnance for the crudeness and garishness of the Chicago of those days, gave his books, if not a bite, at least a nip. In the books he published between 1895 and the advent of the world war—"From the Other Side", "The Last Refuge", "Under the Skylights", and "Waldo Trench and Others"—there is the same exquisite design, the same polished style, the same quiet humor and delicate irony which distinguish all his work, and the same absence of any glow that would give his work force and character. Then there was a period of nine years when nothing, except a few articles here and there, appeared under his name. In 1917 he brought out a book of humorous and experimental verse, parodies and adaptations of the manner of the free verse writers. The book, many items of which had already appeared in Bert Leston Taylor's "Line-o-Type" column in the Chicago "Tribune", was called "Lines Long and Short". Then in 1918 he wrote a novel in strict conformity to his theory that no novel should exceed 60,000 words in length, wherein he developed two contrasting figures of equal importance to his story, one of them the vital and successful, though crude, man of action and the other an artist in temperament, unassertive, withdrawn from life. In this novel there seems to have dawned upon him

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the first realization of what I believe to be the failure of his own career—the failure to make a choice between two roads. If he was to stay in Chicago and use the fiction material at hand in such a way as to give it great significance and meaning, it would have been necessary for him to accept Chicago with fewer regrets that it was not Florence or Milan. If he was to expatriate himself it would have been necessary to do it as thoroughly as did Henry James. In "On the Stairs" he showed for the first time his understanding that vitality and driving purpose, however crude, is naturally more admirable than ineffectiveness, however cultured and beautifully mannered.

It may be said that "Bertram Cope's Year", in so far as it was read and understood at all, shocked Mr. Fuller's friends so painfully that they silenced it into limbo. It is a story, delicately done with the most exquisite taste, of a sublimated irregular affection. It received scant and unintelligent notice from the reviewers and, though it was filled with dynamite scrupulously packed, it fell as harmless as a dud, only to be whispered about here and there by grave people who wondered why Mr. Fuller should choose such a theme. Since then he has written no novels or, if he has written some, he has not published them. Diffidence again and disappointment have conspired to keep his name only a name in our contemporary literature. He has the sensibility and intelligence, the subtlety and delicacy, to produce artistic masterpieces but he lacks temper and gusto—vitality. This is all the more lamentable in that we have in our American literature an abundance of vitality, but not enough of the qualities which Mr. Fuller possesses in a high degree.

THE POEMS OF THE MONTH

Selected by Margaret Widdemer

ONE'S first reaction to a search of the magazines is usually, "There aren't many good poems this month." But a second look makes one realize that it's merely a question of the type of poem any one person prefers. If one happens to like best lyric simplicity, beauty for beauty's sake, and what used to be called "poems of feeling", there are bound to be less abundant pickings than there used to be, for the poetic fashion today is not primarily lyrical, beautiful, or emotional.

Edwin Arlington Robinson has written few lyrics since "The Town Down the River" and "Children of the Night" (there will never be better lyrics than his "Leonora" and "For a Dead Lady" in the first of these), but beauty and intensity of feeling are never lacking in his poems. The mood

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of loss and frustration, in particular, he can evoke better than any other living poet, as in this sonnet:

REUNION

By some derision of wild circumstance
Not then our pleasure somehow to perceive,
Last night we fell together to achieve
A light eclipse of years. But the pale chance
Of youth resumed was lost. Time gave a glance
At each of us, and there was no reprieve;
And when there was at last a way to leave,
Farewell was a foreseen extravagance.

Tonight the west has yet a failing red,
While silence whispers of all things not here;
And round there where the fire was that is dead,
Dusk-hidden tenants that are chairs appear.
The same old stars will soon be overhead,
But not so friendly and not quite so near.

Edwin Arlington Robinson
—*The Nation*

Katherine Mansfield, it seems, was a poet as well as a short story writer. Curiously, her poems are more definitely statements than her prose. Her stories attain their ends by exquisite inference, like a Japanese painting of three brush strokes; while her poetry is story-like. This, however, in particular has the delicacy and clarity of her other work:

NOCTURNE

Sleeping together . . . how tired you were . . .
How warm our room . . . how the firelight spread
On walls and ceiling and great, white bed!
We spoke in whispers as children do,
And now it was I—and then it was you
Slept a moment, to awake—"my dear,
I'm not at all sleepy," one of us said. . . .

Was it a thousand years ago?
I woke in your arms—you were sound asleep—
And heard the pattering sound of sheep.
Softly I slipped to the floor and crept
To the curtained window, then, while you slept,
I watched the sheep pass by in the snow.

Oh, flock of thoughts with their shepherd Fear
Shivering, desolate, out in the cold,
That entered into my heart to fold!
A thousand years . . . was it yesterday
When we, two children of far away,
Clinging close in the darkness, lay
Sleeping together? . . . how tired you were. . . . .

Katherine Mansfield
—*Harper's Magazine*

W. H. Davies's simplicity sometimes, in its self confidence, slips too far and is flat. But "The Two Stars" escapes this defect. It has Wordsworth's very beat in the sixth and seventh lines: but it is good, not bad Wordsworth.

THE TWO STARS

Day has her star, as well as Night,
One star is black, the other white.
I saw a white star burn and pant
And swirl with such a wildness, once—
That I stood still, and almost stared
Myself into a trance!
The star of Day, both seen and heard,
Is but a little, English bird;
The Lark, whose wings beat time to his
Wild rapture, sings, high overhead;
When silence comes, we almost fear
That Earth receives its dead.

W. H. Davies
—*The New Republic*

William Alexander Percy is of Davies's school. But his "Dirge" ends with unexpected stateliness, and he uses his favorite device of assonance in such a way that it adds, not takes away, effect.

DIRGE

Tuck the earth, fold the sod,
Drop the hollow-sounding clod.
Quiet's come; time for sleeping,
Tired out of mirth and weeping,
Calmed at last of mirth and weeping.
Tuck the earth, fold the sod;
Quiet's here, maybe God.

William Alexander Percy
—*The Double Dealer*

"The Poetry Review", which under the American editorship of Alice Hunt

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Bartlett has become an international affair, awards its sea sonnet prize to V. Sackville-West. The verse is cold, but majestic: "cosmic" is the rather worn adjective given it by the judges. The last two lines reach a splendid height.

SEA SONNET

We have forgot, who in safe cities dwell,
The waters that a labouring planet bore
Forgot to trace in their primeval lore
Great shapeless epochs fluted to a shell.
Their old chaotic voices chronicle
The first confusion, and the dark, before
The first adventurer with spear and oar
Towards the unknown pushed out his coracle.

Yet to the requiem of a dying earth,
When man has passed, his fever and his pride,
Still shall the constellations find a grave
In that Pacific whence the moon has birth,
And still the moon shall heap the desolate tide
Beneath the night's unchanging architrave.

V. Sackville-West
—*The Poetry Review*

In the "Silver Lantern" of Karle Wilson Baker there is no Miltonic magnificence; but there is adequate and lovely chiseling of a small thing:

A SILVER LANTERN

A silver lantern
I made of my desire,
A cloudy vessel
That dreamed of fire.

I digged my silver
In a dark mine.
I crushed it and wrought it
And hammered it fine;

With graven blossoms
I made it bright,
And buds of darkness
Dreaming of light,

Till—burnished and finished
And marked with my name—
God blew upon it
And gave the flame.

I carry my lantern
Through the gusty rain:
Shielded with silver
The light streams plain.

I carry my lantern
Through the fierce, bald noon,
I carry my lantern
Under the moon,

Through dark and dazzle
Threading the ray
That picks out the climbing
Hidden Way.

Karle Wilson Baker
—*Casements*

Charles W. Kennedy says again a thing which has been said many times; but he says it with beauty.

I'VE WORKED FOR A SILVER SHILLING

I've worked for a silver shilling!
I've slaved for a friend;
And ever the work was willing,
Though much to mend.

Yet of the years' achieving
Little I find
Worth pride, or hope, or grieving,
Or calling to mind.

But love and laughing youth
And a rain-washed spring:
These were truth,
And a memorable thing.

Charles W. Kennedy
—*Scribner's Magazine*

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TO SEE OR NOT TO SEE

Plays and Motion Pictures of the Month

By John Farrar

PLAYS IN NEW YORK WORTH SEEING

1. CYRANO DE BERGERAC: *Rostand's robust, gay, beautiful play ably translated by Brian Hooker and brilliantly acted.*

2. THE POTTERS: *Comedy of middle class life which is almost as good as "The First Year" and perhaps occasionally better. (Reviewed below.)*

3. MEET THE WIFE: *Satire on literary ladies that is amusing and interesting, with Mary Boland giving a fine performance. (Reviewed below.)*

4. IN THE NEXT ROOM: *The most realistic of all the mystery melodramas. Fine entertainment. (Reviewed below.)*

5. THE SWAN: *Molnar's romantic satire has charm, wit, and beauty.*

6. THE NERVOUS WRECK: *Thoroughly amusing for those who like farce comedy.*

7. RAIN: *Still the most striking sex drama of two seasons, with "Tarnish", "Chains", "The Lady", and "White Cargo" all worth seeing.*

8. SAINT JOAN: *Shaw at his most brilliant and tender. A lovely play finely presented by the Theatre Guild. (To be reviewed next month.)*

9. POPPY *and* MR. BATTLING BUTLER *hold their own as comedies with music, while* THE RISE OF ROSIE O'REILLY *(to be reviewed next month) amuses as a perfectly typical Cohan show.* STEPPING STONES *is the best of the older style musical comedies, and* THE MUSIC BOX REVUE *is the finest of its variety.*

TWO of the funniest plays of the season have appeared this month, and in a year far from notable for funny plays they come as heralds of much joy. "Meet the Wife" by Lynn Starling is a study of a temperamental lady who invites an English poet to her house. The complications which arise are not for discussion, since their surprise affords some of the humor of the play. The satire on the innocent club woman is often deft and, as played by Mary Boland, it takes on an atmosphere of clowning that makes for delight. However, Mr. Starling has clouded what might have been a

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genuinely amusing and penetrating satire by resorting to vaudeville trickery and a somewhat silly plot.

"The Potters" by J. P. McEvoy of Chicago is a play almost as good as Frank Craven's "The First Year", with scenes that are better. The cast is excellent and Augustin Duncan has given it subtle and clever direction. Mr. McEvoy has taken for the characters and background his newspaper syndicate material on the middle class American family. In a series of twelve vignettes he tells their story. For a plot he takes a conventional success story which might have appeared in any one of a dozen of our magazines and might have been written by any one of more than a dozen of our writers; but by his treatment has he glorified it. The oil stock and the ambitious neighbors are here, the young lovers, the elopement—but so wise is Mr. McEvoy that he has treated his subject straight from the shoulder. He has neither sentimentalized his theme nor satirized it. His people and their talk are real, and the thrill we get and the laughs we get are those of recognition. Donald Meek plays Pa Potter with something like perfection; he is wistful, foolish, stumbling, meek, lovable. This is a play worthy of all praise, genuinely funny, artistic.

Of the thoroughly good, workmanlike, and entertaining plays there are two more: "In the Next Room", one of the very best of the mystery melodramas, and "The Lady", a sentimental, colorful, romantic thriller.

"In the Next Room", dramatized by Eleanor Robson and Harriet Ford from Burton E. Stevenson's "The Boule Cabinet", is one of the few stage mysteries that have seen fit to be plausible. It is almost perfectly presented. The "almost" is used simply because it occurs to me that someone may discover something wrong. I didn't—and in spite of the fact that I knew Mr. Stevenson's story well, the play tricked me and held me to the end. On the whole it is a better play than "The Bat", though perhaps not quite such good entertainment from the public standpoint. However, if you like detective stories, here is a play that you must not miss.

In "The Lady" Martin Brown has chosen to go back to a period of grandiose melodrama, and he has written a combination of sentimentality and realism that is fascinating. The cockney girl who wants to be a lady and who really is, without the wanting, is magnificently played by Mary Nash, who again proves herself one of the most appealing and genuinely capable of American actresses. Mr. Brown has further discovered that he can let some of his characters speak French without greatly injuring his play; in fact, the French café scenes are the best in the piece. Perhaps the reason why this drama has been called old fashioned in a season of varied sex lures is the fact that the author keeps his heroine in the path of virtue, all of which goes to show that, contrary to the general opinion, virtue is popular, or at least can be made both popular and attractive.

"Laugh, Clown, Laugh!" and "Sancho Panza" are two plays which, while they have distinct faults, contain much that is beautiful and some really great acting. The second act of "Laugh, Clown, Laugh!" has a holding power that recalls the great scenes of Galsworthy's "Justice". The clown story is always fresh, and here it has new treatment. If the last act is anticlimactic it, at least, affords Lionel Barrymore a chance to display fine character portrayal and unusual restraint. Ian Keith's performance immediately

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THE DRAMA SHELF

"Mary the Third", "'Old Lady 31'", "A Little Journey" by Rachel Crothers (Brentano). Miss Crothers's sometimes complacent, sometimes brilliant abilities here displayed at their best and worst.

"Little Plays for all Occasions" by Granville Forbes Sturgis (Cornhill). Not so bad, some of them—but—for all occasions?

"Masks and Demons" by Kenneth Macgowan and Herman Rosse (Harcourt). A luxurious and fascinating book. Should be in any drama library.

"The Book of Entertainments and Theatricals" by Helen Smith Dayton and Louise Bascom Barratt (McBride). Well written and valuable handbook for those who indulge in any form of amateur entertainment.

"Woman—the Masterpiece" by B. M. Greene (Toronto: Ryerson Press). An interesting idea written in rather stilted terms.

"Confucius" by Sadakichi Hartmann (priv. pub.). A didactic drama which rivals Shaw in length of speeches.

"King David and His Wives" by David Pinski (Huebsch). There is poetry and quiet drama in these Biblical studies translated from the Yiddish by Isaac Goldberg.

"Crossings" by Walter de la Mare (Knopf). Surely not at his best here, Mr. de la Mare yet succeeds in being tender and fanciful.

"Pictorial Beauty on the Screen" by Victor O. Freeburg (Macmillan). A somewhat new and interesting viewpoint well presented.

"Plays from Browning" by Leila A. Wade (Cornhill). Just why these somewhat stilted dramatizations, is a question.

"Jealousy; Enemies; The Law of the Savage" by Mikhail Petrovich Artzybasheff (Boni, Liveright). Rather grotesque and violent variations of the triangle.

"Katerina" by Leonid Andreyev (Brentano). A study of sex insanity and elaborate jealousies.

"The Good-Humored Ladies" by Carlo Goldoni (London: C. W. Beaumont). Exquisite edition of this exquisite fantasy, danced once as a ballet by Lydia Lopokova.

"The Montespan" by Romain Rolland (Huebsch). A rather unpleasant but graphic little drama of Louis XIV and his famous mistress.

"Politian: An Unfinished Tragedy" by Edgar A. Poe (Poe Shrine). A literary curiosity — surely little more.

"Thompson's Luck" by Harry Greenwood Grover (Stewart Kidd). A grim bit that is too short for a really sustained mood.

"Finders-Keepers" by George Kelly (Stewart Kidd). A comparative study of male and female honesty. Clever and playable.

"The Best Moving Pictures of 1922-23" by Robert E. Sherwood (Small, Maynard). An excellent, dependable, and valuable guide to the motion picture world.

"A King's Daughter" by John Masefield (Macmillan). Some lovely verse in a drama concerning Jezebel which is far from this poet's best work.

challenges comparison with that of Mr. Barrymore, and he holds his own well. While his is neither so fine a part nor a performance, it is possessed of fire and grace.

"Sancho Panza" is a play with poetry and real charm. The story of how Don Quixote's faithful esquire governs his island is one of tenderness and quick biting satire. Otis Skinner's interpretation is masterly, the production is scenically effective—but, in its present version, the action is cluttered and the purpose of comedy

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or satire is certainly not clear. So many hands have apparently had a finger in this pie that it is a bit hard to fix the blame. Still, there is so much that is amusing, beautiful, and grandiose in this satirical comedy, I should hate to have missed it—I advise you not to do so.

"Time" and "The Business Widow" failed to accomplish their purposes. "Time", the more amusing of the two, is a satire on the current prevalence of unhappiness among married folk. Its best scenes are excellent—they are chiefly those in which the author is being real. Its worst scenes are those of satirical intent. On the whole the play provides a fairly amusing evening.

"The Business Widow", with Leo Ditrichstein and Lola Fisher, tells us all about what may happen to husbands if they don't look after their wives and what may happen to wives if they don't stick to their husbands. It has entertaining moments but in the main is not worthy of Mr. Ditrichstein's undoubted abilities.

OUTSTANDING MOTION PICTURES

1. THE COVERED WAGON: *Emerson Hough's western story given artistic and elaborate presentation.*
2. THE TEN COMMANDMENTS: *Moments of thrilling beauty in this really great picture. (Reviewed below.)*
3. A WOMAN OF PARIS: *Subtle character study directed by the always clever Charles Chaplin.*
4. SCARAMOUCHE: *Romantic costume melodrama of spirit and picturesqueness.*
5. ANNA CHRISTIE: *Eugene O'Neill's play acted and directed with understanding and skill. (Reviewed below.)*

"THE TEN COMMANDMENTS", as directed by Cecil B. DeMille, in my opinion is the most extraordinary picture ever filmed. In the prologue, which is a picturization of the Book of Exodus, there is such drama and beauty as has seldom been witnessed on stage or screen. The great drama of the escape of the children of Israel from Egypt, the passing through the Red Sea, the giving of the commandments on Mt. Sinai, the worship of the golden calf, the wrath of Jehovah—it is magnificent, it is thrilling, it is terrifying. All this, with its majesty and beauty, brought to bear on the crude, almost hokum morality play which follows, has a tremendous effect. I cannot imagine anyone so sophisticated that he will not come out of the theatre wondering, moved, a trifle stunned. The color photography is exquisite. A beautiful, grandiose production.

Blanche Sweet in "Anna Christie" is a film which you can see knowing that the spirit of Eugene O'Neill's fine play has been preserved both by Miss Sweet and her director. Much of the dialogue of the O'Neill play is there too, unless censorship interferes.

"The Acquittal" is the best film mystery melodrama I have ever seen. It keeps you guessing until the very end—and I may say without shame that I, for one, guessed wrong.

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THE BOOKMAN'S GUIDE TO FICTION

THE BOOKMAN *will present each month tabloid reviews of a selected list of recent fiction. This section will include also the books most in demand according to the current reports in "Books of the Month", compiled by the R. R. Bowker Company, The Baker and Taylor Company's "Retail Bookseller", and "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Monthly Score". Such books as the editor especially recommends are marked with a star.*

IF TODAY BE SWEET—Ednah Aiken—*Dodd, Mead.* The theme is certainly big enough — when prohibition came to the grape growers. The author knows her subject and yet the book just misses fire.

*BLACK OXEN—Gertrude Atherton—*Boni, Liveright.* This story of feminine rejuvenation must be terrifying to the suspicious male.

THE HIGH PLACE—James Branch Cabell —*McBride.* If one tenth the books we read held one tenth the enchantment of this comedy of disenchantment, a reviewer's life would be a delight indeed.

THE WOMAN OF KNOCKALOE—Hall Caine —*Dodd, Mead.* A pacifist discussion of rather sombre mood.

*A LOST LADY—Willa Cather—*Knopf.* A middle western lady wanders through the lives of various men but never really finds herself.

LITTLE DAVID—Robert Stuart Christie—*Seltzer.* Here's a male Pollyanna, less cloying, more virile and just as happy.

THE GASPARDS OF PINE CROFT—Ralph Connor—*Doran.* Tempted and triumphant, another Connor hero really appeals.

THE ALASKAN—James Oliver Curwood—*Cosmopolitan.* A reindeer range affords somewhat new material, mystery aboard a ship, intrigue and love.

TETHERSTONES—Ethel M. Dell—*Putnam.* A novel of farm life made as unreal as only this mistress of sentimental romance knows how.

FLAMING YOUTH—Warner Fabian—*Boni, Liveright.* Obviously written by a doctor, this book is a frank study of sex life as it is lived by some today.

SIR JOHN DERING—Jeffery Farnol—*Little, Brown.* Eighteenth century fustian vivified by Farnol's charm of style and rapid survey of events.

THE MIDDLE OF THE ROAD—Philip Gibbs —*Doran.* Excellent psychological study of marriage over against consideration of the reconstruction period in Europe.

THE SPELL OF SIRIS—Muriel Hine—*Dodd, Mead.* Miss Hine's earlier "Flight" is here brought to an eminently satisfactory conclusion.

*THE COVERED WAGON—Emerson Hough —*Appleton.* Likely to become a classic in its way, along with the moving picture of American colonization.

NOWHERE ELSE IN THE WORLD—Jay William Hudson—*Appleton.* Just another soul in revolt novel.

*LUMMOX — Fannie Hurst — *Harper.* Against the simple mind and emotions of a servant girl is drawn a superb picture of New York life.

*THE END OF THE HOUSE OF ALARD — Sheila Kaye-Smith — *Dutton.* Beautifully written is this intricate character study of a decaying English family.

THE HAPPY ISLES—Basil King—*Harper.* A kidnaped baby grows up to make a successful fight for his rightful place in the sun.

UNDER THE DESERT STARS—Frank Koester—*Washington Square.* A melodrama in which incredible adventures are connected by the slenderest of threads.

NEVER THE TWAIN SHALL MEET—Peter B. Kyne—*Cosmopolitan.* A South Sea beauty and a society belle love the same man—action results.

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*Doctor Nye—Joseph C. Lincoln—*Appleton.* A lovable character in difficulties around and about Cape Cod.

The Lengthened Shadow—William J. Locke—*Dodd, Mead.* A curious story of contrasted temperaments woven about an even more curious legacy.

Love Courageous — Concordia Merrill — *Seltzer.* We wish we could state that this story of a jealous woman is as true to life as it is interesting, but honestly we can't.

Justice of the Peace—Frederick Niven — *Boni, Liveright.* A well worked out study of the deadening effect of a woman's petty jealousy upon the men of her family.

*Bread—Charles G. Norris—*Dutton.* A faithful drawing of the nicest type of modern girl and her problems, which, by the way, Mr. Norris does not solve.

Butterfly — Kathleen Norris — *Doubleday, Page.* Taking charge of a younger sister with talent and temperament is no mean task to set a heroine. But Mrs. Norris sees to it that Hilary gets her due in the end.

Michael's Evil Deeds—E. Phillips Oppenheim—*Little, Brown.* The melodramatic contest between a great detective and a great criminal is brought to an end in this volume.

The White Flag—Gene Stratton-Porter —*Doubleday, Page.* Dying curses, and a most intricate series of loves, trials, and misfortunes test this author's well known abilities to make all right by the final page.

Glory o' the Dawn—Harold T. Pulsifer —*Houghton Mifflin.* A dramatic little funeral oration over the last of the once famous shipwrights of Maine.

Christmas Stories — Jacob Riis — *Macmillan.* These messages of love and cheer were culled from the slums by the great heart of a great man.

Fortune's Fool — Rafael Sabatini — *Houghton Mifflin.* A story of swords and the stage, of woman's smiles and political wiles after the Restoration.

Dr. Graesler — Arthur Schnitzler — *Seltzer.* A subtle portrait that is as gently wise though not quite so piquant as "Casanova's Homecoming".

The Diamond Thieves—Arthur Stringer —*Bobbs-Merrill.* A girl detective gets her love story all tangled up in an exciting hunt for criminals.

Sometimes—Olive Wadsley—*Dodd, Mead.* The old problem of the two men and the one woman takes on a new and tense interest under unusual treatment.

*Jeremy and Hamlet—Hugh Walpole—*Doran.* The author of "Jeremy" again discovers his childhood.

*A Son at the Front—Edith Wharton —*Scribner.* The war, done in terms of life behind the lines, proves itself able to bring out the best and the worst in modern family conditions.

*Oh, Doctor!—Harry Leon Wilson—*Cosmopolitan.* One of the funniest of the pill taking heroes becomes quite cured by various means.

*The Able McLaughlins — Margaret Wilson—*Harper.* A finely presented study of love and life in the 'sixties, in a Scotch community of the middle west.

The Mine With the Iron Door—Harold Bell Wright—*Appleton.* Virtue puts villainy in its place in a story of Arizona gold mines, Indians, and other red bloods.

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THE BOOK OF THE MONTH

JOSEPH CONRAD'S "ROVER"

By Christopher Morley

THE first requisite of good fiction, I suppose, is to tell a tale: to carry the reader along in a current of narrative: to keep him eager to know What Happens. The second desideratum, perhaps, is to tell the tale in such a way that it seems set in an eddy or vibration of a much larger meaning than is immediately apparent. The story must not merely turn on its own axis, but also move in some perhaps unreckonable orbit in a wider dimension.

Conrad's "The Rover" seems to me to fulfil, with enchanting completeness, both these requirements. It is a good story, even a breathless story; but it is always, to the attentive reader, something more than that. I write of it here under a serious disadvantage —by the hazards of the Christmas season I have to set down my impressions with horrid haste, and after only one reading of the book. For it is the kind of novel that transpires best after a second union. It is so full of rich little commentary on human life and passion that one is eager to read it again, just as we long to live again episodes of our own experience that (we dumbly feel) were of great significance. We wish—indeed how furiously we wish!—it were possible to transact those moments anew, more slowly (like a retarded cinema film) so that we might more patiently and curiously study the details and gestures we instinctively realized were of seizing importance. A look in the eyes, a troubled moment, a stammering clumsy word—how full of precious sensibility they were; but they passed like a flash; and we had no chance to scrutinize them as they deserved. "But at my back I always hear Time's winged chariot hurrying near."

Now I have a disagreeable suspicion that perhaps in a notification of this sort the reviewer is supposed to outline the plot of the novel: a thing I have a resolute objection to doing. I will assume that most readers of THE BOOKMAN have, by the time this appears, already read "The Rover", or inwardly (in the inscrutable casket where Velleity becomes Will) determined to do so.

As you already know, the story is laid in the South of France in the years succeeding the French Revolution. The French setting and characters accentuate the French manner of Conrad's prose. It has always struck me that much of his writing sounds oddly like a translation from that language; and here, by unconscious association with his French fantoms, I believe he has often and often given us a French word order which delays the reader's grasp of the sentence until the very end—

> The thought that if he had remained at home he would have probably looked like that man crossed unbidden the mind of Peyrol.
>
> The rover had to turn his attention to that other invader of the strained, ques-

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tionable, and ominous in its origins, peace of the Escampobar farm.

The disinherited soul of that rover ranging for so many years a lawless ocean with the coasts of two continents for a raiding ground, had come back to its crag.

I think you will admit that the arrangement of these sentences is not quite in the English tradition. And indeed the whole book is so steeped in Mediterranean feeling that it seems to belong to French literature rather than to that of our own tongue. This, then, I submit as the first proof, and a very characteristic Conradian proof, of the book's stature, that the reality of his characters has swung him clean off the orbit of English ways of thinking. Perhaps as much as any novelist of modern times, Conrad is susceptible to his fantoms. It is like Walt, "I do not pity the wounded person: I myself become the wounded person." From this point of view "The Rover" appeals to me especially (I trust this will not be misunderstood) because, considered as *English* style, it is by no means the most impressive of his books.

In purely narrative skill, I don't think Conrad has ever surpassed this novel. Again and again we are enchanted by the minute discretion of his selective observation. Exquisitely he can sum a mood, a moment; linger over it, omitting no quaint or tiny analogy of suggestion; then, without loss of an instant, pass flashingly to the next urgency of the story. The one word that comes repeatedly to my mind in regard to this book is *watchfulness*. From the very first pages we find ourselves alertly on the lookout for strange and foreboding movements. As the characters do in the tale, we are continually looking round the corner of the house; looking out of the window; looking for the British ship that is moving slowly on the wrinkled silver of the strait; looking from the kitchen into the *salle* . . . for we are always at the mercy of what is going on somewhere else. Surely that is the essence of art in a tale of suspense.

And then another point. I remember no story of Conrad's in which the strange sacredness of both things and animals is so plainly suggested. Those who have had the contemplation forced upon them—it is an intuition we are all reluctant to admit—know that *things* (I mean things like chairs, teacups, any furniture) have often the most painful and astounding meanings to the mind. Things acquire violent and exclamatory significance by association with human beings with whom we are closely implicated. (Just as human beings, I suppose, acquire significance only by association with those larger vibrations of reality in which we all eddy and turn.) There is a whole minor company of these psychological retainers in "The Rover", and every one of them plays a superbly helpful part in fixing the mood and the mystery in our minds. Old Peyrol's canvas money vest; the humble and pitiable dog whose decease so affected the career of its owner; the goat, the hens, the chairs in the *salle*, the pitchfork, even the soup in the kitchen and the fire on the hearth—each enters, at some appropriate instant, into the movement of the reader's mind. Conrad's watchful and tenderly humorous observation of animals is a trait that I have never seen alluded to; it is not one to be exaggerated, of course; but these creatures are all part of the general mystery of life, and deserve our attention and respect. What more stunning touch than this characterization of Peyrol in terms of poor Michel's very negligible dog—"He, personally, would not

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have made a friend of a dog like Michel's dog, but he understood perfectly the sudden breaking up of the establishment on the shore of the lagoon." The "establishment" (lovely word!) was merely Michel and his mongrel in a little hut.

For that was the essence of old Peyrol, the sea rover, ex-pirate and skeptic as to the purity of Revolutionary zeal. He understood. He was not sentimental; he was simply calm. "What he had gone through had put a drop of universal scorn, a wonderful sedative, into the strange mixture which might have been called the soul of Peyrol." There was something so real, so massive, about the old seaman that even Arlette, who had lived in a fog of the mind ever since the days of the Terror in Toulon, began to revive when she first saw him.

"The Rover", furthermore, seems to me a masterpiece in Conrad's peculiarly characteristic quality of perspective. It is so extraordinarily real because, by being placed far enough away in time, it is drained of all merely irrelevant circumstance; only the essential human necessities come through to us. And the whole world falls away: for a few hours we are suspended there on that southernmost promontory of France, with the Mediterranean underneath us, the profile of the hill rounding the background, and old Peyrol moving solidly among the frailties and passions of that little group. Like Fate itself, Nelson and the British blockading fleet poise just over the sea horizon; and Conrad has never paid more subtly perceptive tribute to the land of his adoption than in his comments, through French mouths, on the strangely mingled generosities and rigors of the English race.

I feel, rather miserably, that these memoranda are painfully inadequate. It would take much careful ratiocination to transmit an effective *précis* of the peculiar fascination of this tale, which is not only more humorous and more rapidly narrative than many of Conrad's books, but is also remarkable in the extraordinary minuteness of its detail. What used once to be described as Conrad's ironical "detachment" proves, more than ever, to be a silly label: he may be detached from merely spurious non-essentials, but over the thrilling obsessions and sorceries of the spirit he lingers with most assiduous care. Arlette seems to me, even in her dreamy and half crazed mind, more real than many of her predecessors in his gallery of women. The question as to why Peyrol set out to sea and certain death has been raised by some reviewers. We can see the author smiling half ironically; for (whether or not Peyrol felt himself falling in love with Arlette, which is fairly plainly hinted at) this dénouement was the only possible one. The blue Mediterranean—"where he lay, lulled by the coil of its crystalline streams"—was not only the boyhood home of Peyrol the sea rover, "the man of dark deeds but of large heart", but also the home, in a sense, of Conrad's own art. After so many years he has returned to it, and has enriched it with one more of those passionate and troubled associations which give certain places of the earth a meaning and a loveliness beyond the color of earth and sky and sea.

The Rover. By Joseph Conrad. Doubleday, Page and Co.

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A SHELF OF RECENT BOOKS

SIR HARRY JOHNSTON, SHOWMAN

By Dorothea Lawrance Mann

THE Englishman, if you listen to his conversation closely, will almost convince you that he belongs to the most futile and worst managed of all nations. Almost—but not quite—for somewhere between impression and conviction, you will become aware that this is his magnificent gesture toward the world. In his own strange way he loves his country as does the Frenchman, is as convinced of her superiority as the German, and praises her more subtly than the American, but he is obliged to assert his individuality in his own manner. If you are misled by what he says, it will only add to his inborn feeling of racial superiority.

Sir Harry Johnston possesses all the usual affectations of his nation. His important achievements he nearly always mentions in a subordinate clause of the sentence. You need not necessarily ignore them on that account. Because during recent years his attention has been centred on the four acres of his garden, you must not suppose that they look bigger or more important to him than those four hundred thousand African square miles which he was previously engaged in adding to the British Empire. It is merely good English manners to stress the four acres and mention the four hundred thousand square miles casually. Sometimes to be sure Sir Harry comes near to forgetting his tall gesture. It is hardly discernible when he is wondering whether English history would have been changed, as far as the Boer War is concerned, had he instead of Sir Alfred Milner been appointed to the High Commissionership of South Africa for which both were mentioned in 1896. We must remember however that during the years between 1880 and 1906 most of Sir Harry's time was passed among simpler and franker people than the English!

To almost any human being the most welcome words of tongue or pen are, "Tell me ALL about yourself." Unfortunately no one — unless possibly a physician — is quite honest in making the demand, so that it is generally wise to curtail the confessions. Sir Harry Johnston merits the right to tell all. We could wish however that he had been more parsimonious in confession. There is material here for half a dozen volumes. It cannot be crowded effectively into one. We should have known him better had he told us less about himself. He has played too many rôles in life: been painter, author, naturalist, diplomat, explorer, treaty maker, empire builder, linguist, ethnologist, biographer of Livingstone, friend of Stanley, of Lord Salisbury and of Colonel Roosevelt, coworker with Cecil Rhodes, and in the later years of his life novelist and short story writer. The showman faces a very difficult task in doing justice to an actor of such versatility; but Sir Harry does not prove too good a showman of himself. Time has woven its golden haze over the past and the confessional mood is alluring. It prevents his discriminating successfully. We knew Sir Harry

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better in "The Gay-Dombeys" and "Mrs. Warren's Daughter" and "The Man Who Did the Right Thing". In "The Story of My Life" we lose him in the multiplicity of his revelations. His dramatic instinct is at fault. Material such as his should have made a thrilling story; actually the exciting incidents, like the amusing ones, are hidden in the midst of many commonplace things. When we can find him he is still the Sir Harry of the novels, with his scorn of emotional religion and fixed theology, and his cynical and humorous regard for his fellow human beings. When he pauses to present some one of the great figures who move familiarly through his pages, he becomes again the artist, but he is never successful in showing himself.

It is poor psychology in the main which hinders Sir Harry. As nearly as we may judge he enjoys himself in all his varied rôles, and he plays no favorites among them. He will not take into account our prejudices. He insists that we take his life as he took it — a little mixture of everything, some native troubles, an excursion into the mountains, an unexpected view of a strange animal, a few observations on native customs or the geography of the country, a tribute to some one of the fine Englishmen who helped build Great Britain's African colonies, a bit about the treatment of fever. Life is like that, we agree, a jumble of many small things. One hopes that when the years of reflection come it will be possible to see some plan, some purpose running through it all, not the mere recreation of daily events.

Sir Harry is, when he wishes to be, an admirable raconteur. We like the story of Cecil Rhodes's tailor thumping on the door and dunning him for a bill of three years' standing, or that of the hastily summoned Sir Harry in pajamas, taking notes of astonishing propositions made by Rhodes in the small hours of the morning, or of Sir Harry being scolded by Cecil Rhodes for the enormous midday meal he had eaten. His consternation when he heard the Duke of Connaught give his mother the wrong name on the occasion when Sir Harry was to be knighted by the queen, is even now apparent. It was not of course permissible for him to correct the queen even upon so intimate a matter as his own name and record! On rare occasions we get hints of the mischievous Sir Harry who confounded both Dickens lovers and Shavians with his lèse majesté. At one such time he recounts his seeing of Queen Victoria's collection of miniatures, picturing the illegitimate as well as the legitimate children of the English sovereigns. The lighter vein is rare however. Sir Harry uses the tall gesture overmuch. He forgets that it is the duty of the autobiographer to treat his subject with as much lightness as he would accord to others.

The Story of My Life. By Sir Harry H. Johnston. The Bobbs-Merrill Co.

THE FIELD OF PRINTS

By Frank Weitenkampf

AMONG the signs of increasing interest in prints is the growing number of books on prints in general, on special media (etching, wood engraving, lithography), and on individual artists. More than one artist has been repeatedly so dealt with. Harrington's definitive catalogue of Haden's etchings is now followed by this volume of nearly one hundred re-

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productions, with an illuminating introduction. Mr. Salaman takes us through Haden's artistic progress, setting out the chronological sequence with an agreeable flow of style and an easy accent of criticism. Haden's racial impulse and love of the native soil, which characterized his long devotion to English landscape, resulted in "direct transcripts, so pictorially suggestive, of familiar home scenes". Among proofs of Haden's keen insight into the craft of his art is the direction to Goulding the printer that dry point be rendered "crisp and full, never smeary". And that other dictum: "Every stroke the etcher makes tells strongly against him if it be bad, or proves him to be a master if it be good." The illustrations are happily done in photogravure, which respects the line, seen "through a screen, darkly" when the half tone is used. The whole a fine and pleasing record, for the print lover, of a great master of his art.

The juxtaposition, on the reviewer's desk, of the book on Haden and the one on sporting prints illustrates as happily as one could wish, and emphasizes forcefully, the very wide range of interest and appeal covered by what we call "prints". That term may seem to apply to but a small corner in the great field of art. Yet when we turn from "fine prints", expressions of the personality of artists such as Dürer, Rembrandt, Whistler, Haden, *et al.*, an imposing quantity, there remains yet a greater mass, produced to serve various popular demands. Among these the sporting print fills a niche of considerable proportions. Through the full response of British artists to British tastes, "sporting prints" has become largely synonymous with the products of the early nineteenth century in England, the period of Alken, Pollard, and the rest. They had predecessors in eighteenth century painters such as Sartorius, Morland, and Stubbs, and their engravers. The story is told both in Ralph Nevill's facile text, and in the full page illustrations. The latter, grouped by subject—horse racing, fox hunting, coaching, shooting, angling — point to the fact that even this specialty has its sub-specialties, each with its distinct appeal. The wish is brought up that the American sporting print be cultivated more as a hobby; it has already begun to be written up. Today prints are being made — studies of animals in their natural environment by Benson, Clark, and others — that attract in a somewhat different way, that stir the sportsman by the association of memory, and with more art than many of the old prints. But the latter will continue to hold us by their sheer human contact.

The Etchings of Sir Francis Seymour Haden, P.R.E. By Malcolm C. Salaman. London: Halton and Truscott Smith, Ltd.

Old English Sporting Prints and Their History. By Ralph Nevill. Edited by Geoffrey Holme. London: The Studio, Ltd.

AN EDITOR LOOKS BACK

By Mrs. J. Borden Harriman

WHEN, as a girl, I first read Bacon's lines

> Reading maketh a full man; conference a ready man; and writing an exact man

a standard was set which I hoped some day to attain. Alas, I never did. But my first impression from "Remembered Yesterdays" was that Robert Underwood Johnson has all those attributes and many more.

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His life has covered the most colorful years of American history. His windows have been wide open, and little of the great pageant passing outside has escaped him. Reconstruction days in the south; Grant's administration and the Star Route scandals; the Tilden-Hayes electoral contest; the Venezuelan affair under Cleveland; the first Bryan campaign involving the gold standard; the splitting of the Democratic Party upon that issue; the Spanish-American War; the assassinations of Garfield and McKinley are all events of moment through which he leads us. From the day when the funeral train bearing the body of President Lincoln went through Cumberland, Indiana—and

> Without a companion, I followed it to Indianapolis, where at night, in the State Capitol, I viewed in tears the noble face of the beloved President, and went a second time into the silent procession, so greatly was I impressed by the beauty and dignity of death and by the half-realized historic significance of the occasion—

to his farewell to another great war president as he turned his face toward Rome as ambassador, he has been acquainted with practically all the noted figures of our times.

Mr. Johnson seems to have known Roosevelt quite well from the time prior to his defeat for mayor of New York. He remembers an interesting interview with him on the day after that election, when Roosevelt came into the office of "The Century" and despondently announced that his political career was at an end. This friendship continued during the period of the acquisition of the Philippines with the surrender thereby of the principles of the Monroe Doctrine, and the events of the Roosevelt administration, including the "trust busting", the "big stick", and the conservation of our natural resources.

Acquaintance with Woodrow Wilson dates back to the period when Wilson was a contributor to "The Century", before he became president of Princeton. Wilson's views then as to the rights of labor were considered by the editors of "The Century", including the author, as being extremely radical. An illuminating interview with Wilson is given, in which he shocked the staff of "The Century" by announcing: "I tell you, gentlemen, great changes are coming in our country, and, especially, something must be done for the working people." Mr. Wilson is again quoted as saying, in commenting on the methods of Carlyle: "But all history is not running to a fire."

Mr. Johnson led, and in a way made, the great fight for the legislation securing copyright to American authors, one of his three principal achievements. The other two are the publication of the Civil War papers, and the fight for the conservation of forests. It was he who first made the suggestion of a national park around the Yosemite Valley, the control of which had been ceded to California. He was afterward active in the successful effort to have this valley receded by the State of California to the United States and put under control of the National Park authorities. He states that he was very materially assisted in this latter matter by E. H. Harriman, president of the Union Pacific Railroad, through his large acquaintance in the California legislature, and his deep concern in forest preservation.

As assistant editor and editor of a well known magazine, it was both natural and necessary that Mr. Johnson keep his hand on the pulse of public opinion and be constantly alert to understand the demands of his read-

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ers. The publication of the "Battles and Leaders of the Civil War" was apparently not only his thought, but the success of it was largely the result of his effort; this is true also of the publication of the Century Dictionary. Interesting is Mr. Johnson's account of the suppression of the publication in "The Century Magazine" of Hale's interview with Kaiser Wilhelm.

While he seems to have had more or less to do with federal legislation and the methods of making laws at Washington, he does not appear to have been very much occupied with great public questions such as currency reform, tariff, relations of labor with capital, the prevention of monopoly, the regulation of railroads, etc. Apparently he is lacking in practical knowledge and comprehension of politics as that word is commonly used, and has taken only an amateurish sort of interest in the operations and methods of political parties and leaders.

Mr. Johnson's resentment at his treatment by a Senate Committee in connection with his testimony before the committee on the bill allowing the City of San Francisco to use the Hetch Hetchy Valley, a portion of the Yosemite, as a water supply for the city, is rather verdant. It was understood, he says, that his hearing was not to be official; moreover, the stenographic report contained glaring errors making him say diametrically the opposite of what he had said. He naïvely adds that he does not know "which of my opponents was responsible for this sharp practice".

We are given intimate, and in many instances delightful, pictures of well known literary men, including Holland, Gilder, Joel Chandler Harris (Uncle Remus), Edmund Clarence Stedman, Richard Henry Stoddard, Walt Whitman, James Russell Lowell, William Dean Howells, and Thomas Bailey Aldrich. Lowell is quoted as saying of Walt Whitman's verses: "It is not poetry at all." In reply to a suggestion that it was something between poetry and prose, he said, "There isn't anything between poetry and prose." Again Lowell, writing to Gilder and offering "The Century" some old letters for publication at fifty pounds, adds this postscript:

> If my wild demand bewilders,
> Think, 'tis only fifty pounds;
> Had I said as many Gilders,
> Where could such a sum be found?

Lowell, Mr. Johnson tells us, was sure that Browning, Tennyson, and George Eliot were Jews.

An amusing letter is mentioned from Kipling, then living in Vermont. In acknowledging a notice that he had been elected a member of The Century, Kipling remarks: "Now, as a private soldier said when they locked him up, 'Now I have a place to get drunk in.' "

To me it is remarkable that woman's suffrage is scarcely mentioned, or the great fight that was made for it and its accomplishment; nor do we find any comment upon the changed position of women with regard to social and political life. In fact the author's mind and sympathies do not seem to have turned to any extent toward humanitarian questions, and the great problem of human development and the rights of the masses and the betterment of their living conditions. He does not appear to have been interested in the realization of that concept of government which holds that "government was made for man and not man for government", and that civilization advances only as the average man gets such treatment under the laws and has such living conditions as the conscience and intelligence of the age demand.

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Personally I like best the early part of the volume, its aroma of pioneer days, and wish that we might have been given more of it. But the book as a whole is undoubtedly a rich and valuable addition to the history of its author's times. I think it was some one of the ancients who said, "History is philosophy learned from examples", and any truthful presentation of the personages and manners of a period is a real contribution on this account. We are all under obligation to Mr. Johnson for having written his reminiscences.

Remembered Yesterdays. By Robert Underwood Johnson. Little, Brown and Co.

POETIC STANDARDS

By Herbert S. Gorman

ONE difficulty of appraising contemporary poetry is the lack of an acceptable standard. Our standards are wholly the result of past eras of poetical inspiration and the major portion of modern singers disclaim loudly against being measured by them. Indeed, the critic does make himself slightly ridiculous when he gravely applies the lessons learned from William Wordsworth to Ezra Pound. The critic and his subject do not jibe; and that seems to be the reason for most of the critical floundering and bewilderment that exists in written comment today. Every little critic has a heaven of his own, into which he puts the gods of his idolatry. There is no remedy for this except, perhaps, a general slaughter of critics, and while this may meet with the warm approbation of most writers it is unfeasible at the present time. Our critics are not so sophisticated as they may appear to be. It would be a slaughter of innocents.

After all, most of our younger critics gossip and converse. They approach authors with that oh-what-I-know-about-you look in their eyes. Now this is extremely diverting; it titillates the curiosity. Because this is so the writer of these paragraphs must apologize for his deficiencies as he admits that he is personally acquainted with three of the writers out of the four to be considered here and that, rack his brain as he may, he can dredge up nothing particularly pertinent to state about them except that Louise Bogan is extremely pleasing to stare at. Being so handicapped, he must be old fashioned and apply himself to their books.

The second series of W. H. Davies's "Collected Poems" is exactly the same as the first. It has been some years now since Davies reached that point of time which may be regarded as his maturity. Since then he has turned out a large number of the wide eyed naïve lyrics which are so peculiarly his own. These snatches of melody are delightful, but more than a hundred of them become monotonous. Aspects of nature, little Cavalier twists on love, a childlike candor in the consideration of cosmic matters, an intense social consciousness—here is the subject matter with which Davies is most himself. And the form with which he circumscribes these things is one of simplicity, of monosyllabic phrasing and even iambs. "Today" is a fair example:

I have no hopes, I have no fears,
Whether my dreams are gossamers
To last beyond my body's day,
Or cobwebs to be brushed away.
Give me this life from hour to hour,
From day to day, and year to year;
This cottage with one extra room

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To lodge a friend if he should come;
This garden green and small, where I
Can sit and see a great big sky
And give me one tall shady tree,
Where, looking through the boughs, I'll see
How the sharp leaves can cut the skies
Into a thousand small blue eyes.

Miss Bogan is quite the reverse of simplicity, and it is safe to assert that "Body of This Death" will have no small vogue among those readers who desire to have their poetry cerebralized. There is an intensity here, a dark dwelling and insistence upon the subtle reactions of a disillusioned mind. There are times (in "A Tale" and "The Frightened Man" for instance) when Miss Bogan appears to have studied the technique of Elinor Wylie to good purpose. For the most part, however, the influence is one of form and not of matter. A superficial observation might imagine a rather close kinship between these two poets, but careful consideration shows this kinship to be mainly one of mental concentration. Miss Bogan's qualities of clear technique, tight thought, and distinguished phrasing are well illustrated by "The Alchemist":

I burned my life, that I might find
A passion wholly of the mind,
Thought divorced from eye and bone,
Ecstasy come to breath alone.
I broke my life, to seek relief
From the flawed light of love and grief.

With mounting beat the utter fire
Charred existence and desire.
I died low, ceased its sudden thresh.
I had found unmysterious flesh —
Not the mind's avid substance — still
Passionate beyond the will.

The work of another woman, Lizette Woodworth Reese's "Wild Cherry", emphasizes the chasm that yawns between our older women poets and that younger group headed by Mrs. Wylie and Miss Bogan. Miss Reese is, perhaps, the most distinguished of these older women poets. She is a born lyrist and in one or two instances (the sonnet "Tears" is one) she has fused emotion, inspiration, and phrasing into achievements that possess as much enduring quality as any work of this generation. "Wild Cherry" exhibits her at her best, although there appear to be no sudden high peaks in it. Here are musical lyrics with poignant twists in them, lucent sonnets, and gentle portraits, all done with an unlabored art that is unquestionably part of the older tradition. Now and then Miss Reese echoes for a moment. The sonnet "Wild Cherry", from which the book is named, contains a last line, "And run, and run, to roof within your heart", which suggests irresistibly Alice Meynell's "I run, I run, I am gathered to your heart."

John Cournos is the solitary free verse writer in this particular quartet of poets and he does not come off very well. "In Exile" contains some well phrased lines, and the greater part of the matter is interesting as personal revelation, but the high touch of authentic poetry is rarely evident. There is a conversational tone to much of this free verse which suggests the novelist and analyst more than the poet. Poetry is an indefinable fusing of emotion, inevitable words, and revelation; and Mr. Cournos lacks the divine fire to fashion this magical substance. There is no doubt that he *feels* it at times; there is a poet beating in the back of Mr. Cournos's mind. Even the reader senses that. But there is no outlet for it in Mr. Cournos; he cannot command this fiery medium.

Collected Poems: Second Series. By W. H. Davies. Harper and Bros.
Body of This Death. By Louise Bogan. Robert M. McBride and Co.
In Exile. By John Cournos. Boni and Liveright.
Wild Cherry. By Lizette Woodworth Reese. The Norman, Remington Co.

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RECENT BOOKS IN BRIEF REVIEW

JUST because mythology has no record of a muse concerned with the art of bamboozling, we should not discredit her existence, for from some unknown source William F. Mannix drew a more than human faculty for cheating the world. We speak of it as the *art* of bamboozling advisedly, for such it was with Mannix, and we are willing to do homage to the artistry of this superlatively imaginative genius — or liar, if you will — who composed "The Memoirs of Li Hung Chang" (Houghton Mifflin). A reissue of this book has just been made. In it Ralph D. Paine gives a sketch of this arch forger's life, of which the colossal wholesale bamboozling represented by the Chinese memoirs was the high spot. Few fictionists could excel in novels the unmoral events this Mannix lived, upsetting as he did all the accepted conventions of honor and duty to turn a dull existence into a riotous romance. The incomparable rascal was glorious in his unsocial program, sinful though it was according to civil law and decalogue. Memory nor Münchhausen could lie like Mannix. Besides this life of the author, there are in the reissue the fictitious memoirs, just as good now as when they fooled Chinese scholars everywhere ten years ago.

There is much sound sense in G. K. Chesterton's "Fads versus Fancies" (Dodd, Mead), though it masquerades in a clown's costume. And there is also much inversion of truth spun out thinly. Mr. Chesterton likes to assume that people mean to be logical, and then to show them by very concrete instances just what would happen if someone took them at their word. He applies psychoanalysis to Hamlet, calls prohibition "that American system of class privilege", defends H. G. Wells's digressions from story writing, and pokes fun at the uses women are making of their comparatively new political rights. Taken all in all, Mr. Chesterton's single track, reductio ad absurdum method of confuting all opponents (to his own satisfaction) is most unconvincing. This is not, after all, a logical world. It is too much dependent on rain for the crops and what one did the night before, for that. Chesterton likes to prove that two things are in the same class and therefore . . . but proving that psychoanalysis and measles are both diseases does not imply that the cure for both is the same.

The strong New England flavor of everything that Alice Brown writes is dominant in "Ellen Prior" (Macmillan) and gives it a fresh, clean beauty that belongs to its subject. It is a long poem in verse, telling Ellen's story — her passionate love, the struggle between her devotion to her blind mother and her desire to serve her husband, and finally her pathetic end. But the story is of infinitely less importance than the form in which it is written. There are any number of beautiful lines, of exquisite phrases, bits that one marks and intends to go back to some day and memorize. Not only is the metre ex-

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pertly handled and the rhyming carefully done, but the thought is conceived with that sense of imagination and spiritual insight into life which is real poetry. An example is the picture of the mother waiting for Ellen's return from the woods; she

> . . . loved to hear her quick returning tread
> Breaking the surface of contented thought
> Into bright shards of wondering what she brought.

"Russia's Women" (Dutton) by Nina Nikolaevna Selivanova is full of astounding information. Here is pictured the life of Russian wives from early history to the present day. It is a sketch rather than a treatise but it contains enough to make one wonder anew at the ability of humans to force a complete readjustment of living. From a most degraded position a hundred years ago the women of Russia have pushed each generation closer to a fair place in the run of social and political life. The influence of the Near East was killed by the more liberal life of the West, and this account of the transformation of Russian women gives hope for any sort of evolution or revolution by any ill used group.

Hazlitt is unfortunately one of those academic immortals; required courses in school and college have well nigh ruined him. It is a shame, because his essays are the top notch of a difficult and delightful art. He was a great man who wrote splendid prose in a manly way and with plenty of humor. P. P. Howe, his recent biographer, has collected some of his best work in a convenient little volume entitled "The Best of Hazlitt" (Doran). It makes a fine cocktail to whet the appetite for more thorough reading.

"We had arrived as enemies and were leaving as friends — a rare occurrence in history." These, the final words of General Henry T. Allen's "My Rhineland Journal" (Houghton Mifflin), are the expression of German opinion on the American forces in Germany — and represent the experience of our troops as regards the Germans. Unfortunately, the experience with the French was not so pleasant. The General, as governor of the Coblenz bridgehead and more or less official representative of the United States on the Rhineland High Commission, had continually to oppose a French policy of attempted domination. When the Ruhr enterprise was in prospect it became evident that the French action would lead to the withdrawal of the Americans. At this point the General made a "private and unofficial" attempt to bring about a renewal of negotiations between France and Germany — with no result other than a rebuke from the State Department. And so ended a chapter in American history in which, according to the General's account, we acquitted ourselves with credit in a situation of great difficulty. The French are still in the Ruhr; this journal may throw light on that problem. Nothing in the diary nor in the accounts from the Rhine country foretells the outcome of the enterprise.

When the literary history of our generation is written, there will be a very curious chapter devoted to the vogue of the anthologists in this decade, and the character of their achievement. Most reasonable excuses for poetical synthesis have been exhausted, and editors and publishers, perhaps in response to a stubborn popular demand, are still casting

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about for subject matter, historical circumstances, or peculiarities of authorship which will justify a new compilation. Midway between reasonable excuse and mere pretext comes "Famous Single Poems" (Harcourt, Brace) edited by Burton E. Stevenson. Mr. Stevenson has observed that "One swallow may not make a summer, but one poem makes a poet." So here they are — "Casey at the Bat", "Ben Bolt", "Kaiser & Co.", and a dozen other solitary immortal verses by poetasters who bloomed and withered without leaving the bibliographers half a chance! The circumstances of composition are appended to each poem, with some biographical material concerning the author.

Ellin Craven Learned entitles her guide for the unmannered "Everybody's Complete Etiquette" (Stokes). Yet when we read: "A dinner of twelve or fourteen persons cannot be properly served without two or three servants to wait on the table and a maid in the pantry" (not to mention the cooks), we feel that some of us come without the pale. We are confirmed in this belief when we learn that "nothing is in worse taste than ungloved hands when traveling". And we are crushed at the thought that "even when recognizing an intimate friend it is not correct to accompany a bow with a broad smile. There may be a 'smile in the eyes', etc." Laura Thornborough, in "Etiquette for Everybody" (Barse and Hopkins), is a shade more reassuring. She actually alludes to an informal Sunday night supper when the servants are away, and makes the startling assertion that "the youth of to-day, practicing this new freedom, has relegated the chaperone to the lumber room." Her hints as to behavior in games and sports could well be taken to heart by certain bridge fiends and motorists of our acquaintance.

James Truslow Adams dates his "Revolutionary New England" (Atlantic Monthly) from 1691 through 1776 and takes up, in very readable detail, the management and mismanagement of the various governments both in the Colonies and abroad. Among the interesting features are Samuel Waldo's advertisement of Eastern Lands (1734); the Tradesmen's Protest against the proceedings of the merchants (1773), and other proclamations; also cartoons of events that aroused nations when they first appeared. The book is the second of a series which promises to rank highest among histories of America. It must be invaluable to the student delving for facts; and it is so delightfully written that the general reader is sure to be charmed with it.

About seventy-five years ago a group of women, asserting that they were part of the "people" of the United States, embarked on an ambitious crusade. Carrie Chapman Catt and Nettie Rogers Shuler in "Woman Suffrage and Politics" (Scribner) have done more than merely tell the story of woman's great adventure. Without recrimination or invective they have disclosed the methods by which the political interests fought and blocked her progress at every step. Their book is a dismaying record of the corruption and chicanery of American politics.

We are deeply indebted to Christopher Ward for "The Triumph of the Nut" (Holt). For we have now given up the struggle of manufacturing

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bright conversation with which to regale our bookish friends. We simply read these parodies aloud to them, and the evening is made. Take your choice: there's the title piece, whose subtitle is "Too Many Marriages"; or else "Joseph and the Bright Shawl"; "The Perils of Peregrine"; "Blacker Oxen"; "One of Hers"; "Paradise Be Damned!"; "Some Freedom!"; and a dozen others equally enticing. Their charm lies in the fact that they are startlingly like the originals; yet they will entertain you even if you haven't read the novels.

The third volume in the "History of Art" (Harper) by Elie Faure, translated by Walter Pach, concerns itself quite admirably with Renaissance art. The first and second of the volumes were well received by the intelligentsia at large, and this last volume gives every indication of meeting with a similar popularity. Beginning with Florence, M. Faure discusses in turn Rome and the School, Venice, the Franco-Flemish Circle, Fontainebleau, the Loire and the Valois, and Germany and the Reformation. There are understanding and penetration here not usually found in such treatises — a welcome tendency really to get at the fundamentals of artistic creation and discover what causes actuated certain effects. The book is admirably illustrated.

From Walter Damrosch's "My Musical Life" (Scribner) one gets the impression of an honest man with little intellectual sophistication, hence absolutely without the ability to see himself as others do in his proper relation to the cosmos. Mr. Damrosch's very modesty seems a conscious modesty demanded by propriety and belied by his immense self complacency. True, he has a right to be complacent, for it was noble pioneer work he did for many years, and in the cause of musical education his name is one of the first. But he takes his achievements far too seriously. His accounts of famous persons are trivial or saccharine; his treatment of more controversial questions is flabby; but these defects in his book may be attributed in part to the audience for whom it was intended.

Alexander Meiklejohn should not need to depend on his notoriety for readers. Whatever his record may be as president of Amherst makes no difference. He is an essayist worth the time of anyone interested in thoughtful work. If his touch is not light, there is compensation in the discovery that his thoughts are scholarly. To old New England he may seem radical, but his essays appear conservative enough to one accustomed to younger writers. Even if reading his work makes one quarrel with his conclusions, that is worth something. The papers in "Freedom and the College" (Century) give this deposed executive an enviable position among the radical conservatives.

The day when children's reading was an indiscriminate medley of fairy stories and "Elsie books" is long since past. The best writers of the day lend their pens to juvenile literature, the best artists illustrate it, and the best critics pick the wheat from the chaff for the small readers. As the supervisor of work with children in the New York Public Library, Anne Carroll Moore has given many years to the study of this field and she has a keen appreciation of the child's needs as well as a wide knowledge of the

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books of the day. "New Roads to Childhood" (Doran) is a collection of her articles, many of which have already appeared in THE BOOKMAN; and it follows up her first volume on "Roads to Childhood". Both of them are charmingly written; they should be read by anyone who is directing the reading of a child.

"The Case for Prohibition: Its Past, Present Accomplishments, and Future in America" (Funk, Wagnalls) by Clarence True Wilson, D.D., and Deets Pickett, all in all certainly answers our jovial apologists and arch propagandists for appetite *über* Constitution in the United States; this, despite the fact that it smacks of the old Andover temperance school at times. Blind pigs and kitchen bar rooms certainly did receive less free advertising than the present bootlegger gets. Why did the Keeley Cure Institute quit two months after prohibition went into effect? How the sons and daughters of laborers are unwontedly crowding our colleges! Drink Postum — and grape juice. There are reasons.

The truth is often depressing in contemporary autobiography. The anonymous author of "Haunch, Paunch and Jowl" (Boni, Liveright) tells the true story of "When New York Was a Wide Open Town". It was not so long ago and is sordid enough a tale, in all conscience. The author purports to be a judge of the Superior Court who bought the position as the price of silence regarding some very unpleasant matters. He had founded an opulent legal career, indeed, on unpleasant matters. As a shrewd product of Ludlow Street he cultivated the pose of professional Jew, friend of the people, and scourge of the unrighteous wealthy members of the opposing political faction. His motto was, "Play the game as you see it played." He had an uncanny knowledge of the common American, and a complete, cynical contempt for him. This gave him poise and a philosophy. His moments of self distrust, the stirring of a rudimentary idealism within him, give the book a tragic, mordant edge, an exquisite irony constantly felt but seldom quite explicit.

In "An American Looks at His World" (U. of Delaware) Glenn Frank, editor of "The Century Magazine", certainly is socially useful in his favorite fields of forensic—"Muckraking Our Peripatetics", "Slang and Jargon", "Piety and Playfulness", "The Social Aim of Education", "Americanizing Americanization", "Academic Peonage", "The Acid of Docility" — anywhere except in the deceitful lists of politics. In politics he shows himself no mean master of "The Art of Saying Nothing". He is more worthily employed in coming between H. L. Mencken and Stuart P. Sherman than in dealing with capital and labor. Anyway, Mr. Frank's sense of the fitness of things and of humor runs to Stephen Leacock and to Christopher Morley rather than to Paul Elmer More and Professor Sherman. He will have no truck with Ph.Docracy and better-than-thou-ness. After this, is it possible to consider Mr. Frank a scholar, an American, and a gentleman?

Christopher Morley is so versatile that when he produces such a collection of verse as "Parsons' Pleasure" (Doran) one is at a loss to classify it. The poems here run a wide range: most of them good, some of them—

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such as the unforgetable introduction to "Where the Blue Begins"—excellent. In the "Evening Post", Mr. Morley tries a little bit of everything, and from those attempts he has again gathered many things. The book is divided into three sections, and from their titles one may guess how diversified the contents are: "Parsons and Pleasures", "Translations from the Chinese", and "Epi (sodes, grams, taphs)".

"The Pioneer West" (Little, Brown) is a collection of extracts, mostly from fiction, intended to give a picture of the many phases of "the great, the never-to-be-forgotten epic of our newer civilization". From a chapter of Lewis and Clark's journal through Bret Harte, Mark Twain, General Custer and others, Joseph Lewis French, the editor, carries the reader. The book covers such a big field that it becomes a catalogue urging the reader to go further and read the entire books of which chapters are given here. Hamlin Garland has written an introduction.

None but golfers are expected to read "The Epic of Golf" (Houghton Mifflin), a lengthy rhyming composition by Clinton Scollard. Assuming, without any reason, that most golfers are not discriminating in their poetic tastes, this book should go well as a gift affair when ties, handkerchiefs, and socks seem inadvisable. A. B. Frost has done characteristic sketches to illustrate the ordinary text of golf enthusiasm.

There is no better short life of Shelley than the admirable "Shelley" of A. Clutton-Brock (Dutton) which is now reissued in revised edition, with very handsome dress and four illustrations. For its facts the book relies largely upon the contemporary accounts of Thomas Jefferson Hogg and Edward John Trelawny; for its informing spirit upon the justness and vivacity of Professor Clutton-Brock himself. He descends neither to advocacy nor censure in dealing with Shelley's life. His aim is to present Shelley as he was in the flesh, and to sum up the best critical opinion of his poetry. It requires no great generosity of spirit to affirm Mr. Clutton-Brock's unqualified success in the achievement of his intention.

Through the magic door of his bookcase Conan Doyle leads us into the El Dorado of his favorite authors. No startling revelations or literary discoveries does he make; but he gives us much sound and rather erudite criticism that is as valuable today as it was on the original appearance, seventeen years ago, of "Through the Magic Door" (Doubleday, Page). Sir Arthur reveals himself as a lover of the nineteenth century classics, especially of historical works, and most especially of records of the Napoleonic era. Not content with writing merely about books, he adds some fascinating word portraits —some his own, some quoted—of the writers. It is interesting, in the light of the author's later development, to note occasional allusions to his conviction of spiritual interposition in human affairs.

Oriental philosophy holds a strange fascination for occidental minds. And doubly attractive is this philosophy when it is couched in the beautifully simple poetic prose of Kahlil Gibran's "The Prophet" (Knopf). A modern, mystical touch is imparted to the book by the twelve drawings with which

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the author ornaments his text—highly artistic drawings of graceful nudes rising from chaos, as if to illustrate the striving toward clarity of more or less complicated ideas.

One may well expect the first biography of a newly inaugurated president to be a bit overlaudatory — especially if the biographer be an old colleague. R. M. Washburn in "Calvin Coolidge" (Small, Maynard) has fortunately failed to fulfil such expectations. It would appear that the man who originated the title of "Calvin the Silent" has the wit to banter his hero gently, and just enough compunction to apologize for so doing. The chapter on Calvin's not-so-bright college years at Amherst may make the subject writhe a bit. However, Mr. Washburn is a bit overawed by the dignity of office and grows more solemn as he leads Mr. Coolidge higher in rank. The book is no profound analysis of a great character; time enough for that when the new president establishes his place in history.

The primary allegiance of a humorous book is not to literature, but to laughter. The fundamental question to be asked of it is, "Is it funny?"; strictly speaking, it should not be considered from the literary viewpoint at all. But "As Is" by Henry William Hanemann, illustrated by John Held, Jr. (Harcourt, Brace), at once attains that harmony, approaching indivisibility, which is the desideratum of all art, and satisfies the reader's risibilities with almost unprecedented completeness. Penetrating observation of life and an instinctive selection of those elements that lend themselves to humorous accentuation are the basis of this book; it is built up with a real mastery of every form of humor into a revel of fun. In especial the "Lessons in New Yorkese" are as inimitable as they are priceless. The illustrations follow, of necessity, the lead of the text; they are apt and witty. But there can be no second hand appreciation of such a book; it must be known and enjoyed personally.

A curious mixture of unimaginativeness and intelligence flavors Frank Jewett Mather's "A History of Italian Painting" (Holt). Perhaps the one is Professor Mather's natural bent and the other a result of teaching art professionally. The book covers its field ably enough; but when the author begins to get too heavily statistical the reader wishes he might have forgotten dates and names and allowed himself to infuse more color into his pages. As it is, he has succeeded in doing exactly what is expected in supplying a rather interesting textbook concerning everything from Botticelli to the Realists and Eclectics. Here is a book to interest a layman but not especially likely to attract an advanced student.

"Our ideals and moral traditions are in conflict with our racial and national loyalties. A close examination may show that loyalty to race and nation may make for greater good to the world than will the attempt to realize these ideals." So (in substance) says Charles Conant Josey, Ph.D., in "Race and National Solidarity" (Scribner). The exposition of this thesis is performed in a laborious and tedious manner. Each chapter closes with a lengthy bibliography—anything from Lothrop Stoddard to Nietzsche. The ideas presented are by no means complex; it

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must be the style that makes the book such ponderous reading.

"Three Generations" (Little, Brown) by Maud Howe Elliott, the daughter of Julia Ward Howe, is a book of reminiscences which verges close on autobiography. It is packed with impressions of the famous people who have met Mrs. Elliott. And it is also a travelogue with emphasis on the scenes and events which made particular places interesting at certain times. In between are personal anecdote and family pictures. On the surface, it seems important as an historical source book. But it is, finally, too personal, almost too superficial. Written in a curiously compounded style, it goes along pleasantly enough for a while, and then the reader begins to realize that it is a very long book. There is apparent, however, the author's intense interest in what she tells; this gives the work a certain amount of gusto. And in a definitely minor key, it does a little for America (that is, mainly Boston) what "Queen Victoria" did for a partially corresponding period in London. The European chapters, which make up about half, seem slightly extraneous.

Though Walter Gaston Shotwell handles his threads of narrative well and gives deserved emphasis to less celebrated engagements, less trumpeted generals, in his "brief" 450,000 word story of "The Civil War in America" (Longmans, Green), too little is given by him of this war's causes, civilian accompaniments, and after effects. Less of military manœuvres and reports, occasional maps and charts, and more cries of the private, "There goes Jackson or a rabbit", "Ulysses don't scare worth a d——n", more of the "damaged" nobility of such pariahs as Benjamin Lundy, Hinton Rowan Helper, John Brown, Ben Butler, Van Dorn, and Burnside — these would have humanized the two big, monotonous volumes. Mr. Shotwell's facts and figures occasionally contradict one another, and he may be accused justly of some unfairness toward the south. On the whole, however, this is a painstaking and significant history.

Critics of our handling of the prohibition question seem often to forget that, like the Bolshevistic efforts of Russia, national prohibition in the United States is still in the experimental stage. A profound moral revolution, though formally approved by a majority of voting citizens, cannot be expected to become firmly established in a few years: man is too much a creature of habit in thought and life to be easily derailed from his accustomed track. That is the explanation of the difficulties with which the Prohibition Department of our government has had to cope. Indeed, it speaks much for the efficiency of the department that its agents have already succeeded in their task to the remarkable extent that Prohibition Commissioner Roy A. Haynes reveals in "Prohibition Inside Out" (Doubleday, Page). In addition to valuable sociological information, this book gives thrills a-plenty for the lover of tales of adventure. Not the least interesting point Mr. Haynes makes is his discrediting of the popular belief in widespread corruption among the prohibition agents.

Although "Ventures in Book Collecting" by William Harris Arnold (Scribner) has intrinsic value its interest is not a fixed one; it depends

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on the enthusiasm of the reader for the subject matter of the book. Those who share the author's fondness for the chase of literary rarities will listen with sympathetic pleasure to his stories of the game he caught and the sport involved; and they will find much to appreciate and enjoy in his display of trophies. Mr. Harris unlocks his treasure chest with a frank "I'm a lucky fellow" that is engaging, because he is happy in his luck rather than proud. He brings forth, against an appropriate anecdotal background, copies of a large number of notable letters and facsimiles of autographs and title pages the originals of which, among other sought after items, were in his collection. The book is bibliographically an important one, if only for the Stevenson letters, notes, and poems here published for the first time. For this generosity not only the bibliophile but the general reader must be grateful.

Irvin Cobb, that able literary prestidigitator, has now put forth in cook book form the laugh recipes of a couple of generations. Cobb's Complete Joke Book is with us. "A Laugh a Day Keeps the Doctor Away" (Doran), while perhaps not quite so valiant as its title indicates, is nevertheless an unusually good collection of humorous anecdotes. In a book comprising some three hundred and sixty haw haw generators, it is really creditable that so many do actually tickle the ribs. You will find here, of course, the one about the Traveling Man and the Spinster as well as the one about the Irishman and the Jew—but to Mr. Cobb's credit, and as he points out in his preface, it should be stated that in not one of the stories is there a colored boy named Rastus.

In "Europe Since 1918" (Century) Herbert Adams Gibbons has given us, as a result of close contact with events and their principal actors, a summary of the important treaties, negotiations, and political happenings in Europe since the war. This is a straightforward unbiased narrative that makes easy, comprehensible reading for every person interested in modern history. Mr. Gibbons obviously intends us to feel the instability and the sinister threatening condition of the Old World, and quite fully succeeds. He points out that the Allies were as unprepared for peace as for war, that they found themselves in the midst of peace negotiations without having anticipated or prepared for them. He emphasizes what we have been hearing so often from every source—the universal greed, distrust, and desire for revenge that seem to motivate the nations more strongly than ever before. As a result, he states, practically every treaty and conference since 1918 — with the possible exception of the Washington disarmament parley — is impossible of fulfilment, and will eventually prove to have been ineffectual. Truly this volume fills one with forebodings, and gives cause for sober reflection.

Magazine editors are constantly warning young hopefuls that everyone in the country is writing verse, so that chances of success in this endeavor are small. Just when this warning begins to take effect, the young hopeful realizes that books of mediocre verse are being published and he knows he can improve on them. Young hopefuls on the brink of despair may find assurance by reading the conventional "River Dusk and Other Poems" (Evans Brown) by Agnes Kendrick Gray.

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THE BOOKMAN'S MONTHLY SCORE

Compiled by Frank Parker Stockbridge, Life Member of the American Library Association, in Cooperation with the Public Libraries of America

Still at the head of the general list, Papini's "Life of Christ" for December has a score of more than twice as many points as its nearest rival for popularity; a score, in fact, higher than any book except "The Outline of History" has ever achieved since this monthly record was begun, more than five years ago. This is, perhaps, another evidence of the prevailing state of spiritual unrest.

Everything is under review; religion, history, science, politics. We are face to face with the phenomenon, unknown heretofore in the history of mankind and hardly known today outside of our own country, of a nation of literates, to whom all literature is for the first time fully accessible. Add to this an environment crowded with stimuli to curiosity, crammed with marvels which daily offer new challenges to ancient beliefs, and one of the inevitable results is what every librarian sees every day; eager, earnest men and women of all ages reexamining the old doctrines in every field of knowledge, seizing upon every new interpretation of life and applying to it the subjective test, in the effort to orient themselves in a world which is not alone different from that of their fathers but vastly different, in its external manifestations, from that of their own infancy. Their fathers took their perplexities to the prince, the priest, the pedagogue or the physician; they take theirs to the public library.—F. P. S.

FICTION

1.	Black Oxen	*Gertrude Atherton*	BONI
2.	A Lost Lady	*Willa Cather*	KNOPF
3.	A Son at the Front	*Edith Wharton*	SCRIBNER
4.	Never the Twain Shall Meet	*Peter B. Kyne*	COSMOPOLITAN
5.	Bread	*Charles G. Norris*	DUTTON
6.	The Mine with the Iron Door	*Harold Bell Wright*	APPLETON
7.	The White Flag	*Gene Stratton-Porter*	DOUBLEDAY
8.	The Covered Wagon	*Emerson Hough*	APPLETON
9.	Butterfly	*Kathleen Norris*	DOUBLEDAY
10.	The Alaskan	*James Oliver Curwood*	COSMOPOLITAN

GENERAL

1.	Life of Christ	*Giovanni Papini*	HARCOURT
2.	Etiquette	*Emily Post*	FUNK & WAGNALLS
3.	Life and Letters of Walter H. Page	*Burton J. Hendrick*	DOUBLEDAY
4.	The Outline of History	*H. G. Wells*	MACMILLAN
5.	A Man From Maine	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER
6.	The Dance of Life	*Havelock Ellis*	HOUGHTON
7.	Up Stream	*Ludwig Lewisohn*	BONI
8.	My Garden of Memory	*Kate Douglas Wiggin*	HOUGHTON
9.	The Mind in the Making	*James Harvey Robinson*	HARPER
10.	The Americanization of Edward Bok	*Edward Bok*	SCRIBNER

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THE EDITOR RECOMMENDS—

Our Theatre and Our Movies

"OUR AMERICAN THEATRE" (Brentano) by Oliver M. Sayler is, in some ways, the most informative book on our present day theatre obtainable. From a definite viewpoint, from a rich store of information gathered in intimate contacts, Mr. Sayler gives a rapid fire survey of the entire field of dramatics. Often and often I disagree with him; so will you. But he is, in the main, fair, and this volume is one which any drama library must include. The essay on "Our Theatre Audience" is splendid. So is the one on "Revue, Variety and Dance". The illustrations are excellent—so are the numerous appendices —lists of one sort and another.

To those interested in the moving pictures, Robert E. Sherwood's "The Best Moving Pictures—1922-23" (Small, Maynard) is quite as indispensable. It is a well edited, compact study of movies and movie things. The appended "Who's Who in the Movies" is extraordinarily useful to anyone who takes the moving pictures seriously.

Wise Reminiscence

IF an autobiography like "Garrulities of an Octogenarian Editor" (Houghton Mifflin) makes itself available once a year, or even once in five years, we may count our stars fortunate. Here is a volume of chatty and wise anecdotes and musings covering practically the entire period of the last century. From his boyhood friendship with the poet Sill at Yale to his contact with the youth of today, Henry Holt has sustained his enthusiasm, his dignity, and his ability to observe mankind with more than tolerant understanding—with real appreciation. Through these pages move Charles Dickens and Mark Twain, Rafael Pumpelly and John Fiske. Here is a philosophy early influenced by Darwinism, working through to a peculiar but profoundly stirring mysticism. It is the record of the life of a cultured, thoughtful, upright, humorful American, who knows that first of all, perhaps, he owes it to mankind to tell just how he has been able to live so long and useful a life—health first, in other words. What a simple rule this one is, and how little followed:

> The advice based on my long experience would be: Don't be afraid of night work for spurts, if you'll eat a little when your stomach calls for it, and get sleep enough at other times. But don't cultivate the habit; for, I repeat, it will interfere with your domestic relations, your friendships, and your practical affairs.

A wise admonition this, and what a ripe wisdom it shows:

> Don't demand perfection anywhere but in yourself and your work. Cultivate the art of getting happiness from imperfect experiences, and especially from imperfect people. As a rule, happiness eludes direct search; it is mainly a by-product of duty. Next to depending upon love and morals, it depends upon health, but even they too depend largely upon health, and health depends upon temperance, and that is lacking oftener in eating than in drinking.

And how crisp and satisfactory are the chapters on religion!

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From these sources I have been gradually making up my own religion. I once asked Whitney, the great philologist, what dictionary he relied on, and he answered: "Why, I'm my own dictionary." It took me a little while to think it out. So the ideal seems to me unquestionably that each man should have his own religion. The other day I was astonished to read in Dean Inge: "We cannot make a religion for others, and we ought not to let others make a religion for us." But aren't those things just what the church and the faithful have always been doing?

A Saga of Growth

IN "The Midlander" (Doubleday, Page) Booth Tarkington has attempted a very difficult thing, and has practically succeeded. He has attempted to explain the crudities, the development, the heart of his own middle west in terms of personalities. I think that in some ways this is his best book, yet it is not, to me, so moving a book as "Alice Adams". This is partly because "The Midlander" is so much larger a canvas, and the character drawing is not so intensified. The original idea of "The Midlander" was a clever one. Four opposing ideas are represented by the young people of the story. Dan—bluff, energetic, pig headed, interested in the commercial development of his town and the manufacture of automobiles. Harlan—his brother, the essential æsthete, bored by Dan's energy, thoroughly undemocratic, but fine in essence. Martha—the understanding woman, typical, in a sense, of the pioneer spirit, democratic, tolerant, loving. Lena—wilful, selfish, temperamental, typifying the effete east. These, in their varying relations, form the basis of the story, with the terrifying figure of old Grandmother Savage in the background. It is a fine study of a period, a fine development of characters. It reminds one of Galsworthy. And it seems to me, somehow, to lack the quick movement, the rare gaiety of the real Tarkington.

Poems Vigorous and Quiet

THERE is a quality in the poetry of Robert Roe that either appeals mightily or leaves the reader in vague puzzlement. I am inclined to think that "Here You Have Me!" (Doran) is an important book. I am inclined to think that Robert Roe and Hervey Allen are the two most important of the younger poets. In "Marines" and in "A Sailor's Notebook" Mr. Roe reproduces with startling beauty the crude dreaming quality of a sailor's imagining. In this section of his book he is reminiscent of Whitman, yet with a vigor and a breadth of imagery that is entirely his own. It is the poetry of ego. It is essentially male; but it is grandiose in conception and execution. There are moments that remind one of the calm strength of Biblical rhythm. For example, "Medallion":

> I love the noble and dark
> Brown face of God
> Who sits composed in his poise
> Uttering words like mountains
> Pouring phrases like rivers
> When, blown by the winds of my soul
> I cling like a gnat
> In his bristling beard.
>
> He wears the sky on his hair
> For a clout
> And the sea on his neck
> For a scarf
> With the loose ends lifting,
> Relapsing.

The vigor of life, the joy of love, the tenderness of friendship are in these extraordinary poems. I commend them to you, knowing perfectly well that

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many of you will consider them strange and even impossible; but knowing that many others of you will recognize their quality of magnificence.

Surely a quieter book is "Sonnets of the Cross" by Thomas S. Jones, Jr. (London: Society of SS. Peter & Paul). These are sonnets of a variety so fine and so rare that here, too, only the occasional person will recognize it. Reverence is a great gift. Simplicity of phrase which borders on perfection is another. Religious inspiration is still another—and many of these sonnets have them all, and are memorable. The poet's images are quiet; almost, I suppose, trite; yet not trite, because they belong in the mood. I want to quote one poem, not the best, but one which sings with a rare feeling — "Clonard":

By lost Clonard the river meads still hold
  Forgotten dreams, white memories pure as dew,
  Of fragrant days when scholars wandered through
The marshy grass, and hearts had not grown old;
Beneath her purple hills a saint once told
  A starry tale, a story strange and new
  Brought from the dawn-lands — and all Eiré drew
Around his moat to hear the words of gold.

There stands no cross, or tower, or ancient wall
  Mellow with simple peace men used to know,
  And from the fields no courtly town has sprung:
Only along green banks the blackbirds call,
  Just as they did a thousand years ago
  In morning meadows when the world was young.

—*J. F.*

PAWNBROKERS

By Marguerite Wilkinson

GOD bless pawnbrokers!
They are quiet men.
You may go once —
You may go again —
They do not question
As a brother might;
They never say
What they think is right;
They never hint
All you ought to know;
Lay your treasure down,
Take your cash and go,
Fold your ticket up
In a secret place
With your shaken pride
And your shy disgrace,
Take the burly world
By the throat again —
God bless pawnbrokers!
They are quiet men.

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IN THE BOOKMAN'S MAIL

DEAR MR. FARRAR:

If people never wrote that they don't know what we do know, we, who know, you know, would never be able to tell those who don't know what we do know, now would we?

That's why I don't pounce like an eagle, hiss like a snake, swoop like a sloop or attempt to beat up, as a man a maid no longer one, Arthur Sturges Hildebrand when he quotes that lovely old unknowing of the Bible as if its four mysteries still were unpenetrated. Mr. Hildebrand quotes:

"There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not: the way of an eagle in the air; the way of a serpent upon a rock; the way of a ship in the midst of the sea; and the way of a man with a maid." And Mr. Hildebrand says: "The mystery is a mystery still."

This is the second or third time I've heard this quote and a similar comment in the past year, and I rise in protest.

The way of an eagle in the air was given scientific and plausible explanation by a writer in "The Atlantic" a year or two ago. He soars by an imperceptible (at a distance) swelling and thinning of his mighty chest muscles.

A snake hangs upon a rock, if it be not too smooth or too tilted, by the fact that his ribs serve as so many feet to press and hold and forward him.

The way of a ship depends upon winds, tides, motive power, and steering—like the others is purely a mechanical thing.

And the only reason any mystery still attaches to the way of a man with a maid is that our really realistic books, like those of Frank Harris, are debarred from our libraries, and individual men usually feel too foolish when they've gotten in the way of a maid to talk much about it.

It is the work of a vandal to uncover beauty in this way; but in these years Science must be served.

Sincerely,
BATTELL LOOMIS.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

My attention has again been called to a "letter written in Camden" by one Guido Bruno and published in Miss Elizabeth Leavitt Keller's book, "Walt Whitman in Mickle Street". Bruno's statements are, to a large extent, pure fabrication to anyone living in Camden and knowing the "Mr. Ketler" he refers to. Bruno's carelessness and indifference to the truth are shown in his erroneous statements as to time and place. Ketler's memory concerning Whitman could not have gone back "forty years", as Bruno alleges, for Ketler is not old enough to have a memory that long. Moreover, Ketler assures me that he told Bruno he knew nothing of Whitman's private life, but that he did answer, or try to answer, Bruno's questions as to Whitman's own statements about his past. Ketler also assures me that all his statements to Bruno were grossly distorted by the latter, and inasmuch as Bruno borrowed certain valuable Whitman souvenirs from me and has never returned them, despite his solemn promise to do so, I prefer to believe Ketler rather than Bruno. Incidentally, I have known Ketler for about thirty years and have no reason to distrust him now, either in this Whitman matter or any other matter.

I was Whitman's physician, and I know that his life in Camden was free of scandal. His genial and affable manners made him friends in this city and elsewhere, and his work will endure regardless of the efforts of Bruno to dig up scandal in his early life.

ALEXANDER MACALISTER, M. D.

MY DEAR SIR:—

"A letter in reply to a young gentleman of Yale University" by William McFee in the October issue of THE BOOKMAN furnished me with a very delightful hour. Pressing matters of business have prevented an earlier acknowledgment.

The querulous disposition of the objectionist finds plenty to engage his attention; even my own dormant pugnacity is aroused!

Allow me to express admiration for the manner in which Mr. McFee weaves a very workable philosophy into this epistle of his. It appears to me as common sense made easily assimilable. And yet, what a gigantic illusion!

Do we all have "considerable difficulty in matters to write about"? If art comes to us unconsciously, growing out of the universal instinct for imitation, there should be nothing more simple than playing upon the delicate strings of language. But that is not so!

Neither modern psychology nor endocrinology solves this question of the artist's inspiration. Genius is the elemental power

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of Chaos containing all potentialities. It is above imitation. It touches the idea of Kant's "a priori". Conceptions that are seemingly created upon "a posteriori" experience, which is quite akin to imitation, are the illusions by which we live. They are unreal. Their very unreality furnishes the line of demarcation between the genius and his distant relatives to which most of us have the honor to belong.

Is it a wise provision of nature that when we are young we lack power? The young are the only creatures close to power. As we journey toward the unknown, the capacity for portraying illusion becomes greater and we learn to respect age and ability. That is not power, but the maturing of impressions having their basis in imitative behavior.

Constant qualities are justified only by the inconsistencies thereof; that the young lack power is going just a little too far.

The exception taken to modern critical jargon indicates Mr. McFee's youth of soul. Who but the decrepit in mind and body dare proclaim life formless and incomprehensible? Who can glance twice upon the profundity of Goethe without calling upon the resistance of youth? Yet a faint suspicion that your contributor is flirting with age arises from his ready acceptance of Goethe's idea of art. In reality Goethe had no more idea of art than anyone else. He possessed greater power to portray, but that does not signify understanding. To some art is "La Grande Passion", to others bohemian revelry; to many creative intelligence. To none has it ever been what it really is: Part of the gigantic illusion.

Ancient mythology is full of truth. Minerva springing from the head of Jove is pregnant with possibilities when we listen to the whisper of the elusive atom. From the great universal reservoir we draw unconsciously. Symbolism becomes the language of languages, while we, innocently, and with perfectly good intentions, revel in what is not.

Rabindranath Tagore comes closer to answering the myriad doubts of earth dwellers. You recall the occasion of his visit to this country years ago. How the literary folks delighted in honoring a man such as he! They were right in thinking much of him. During the reception they treated him to speech and witticism. What was his answer? "Ladies and Gentlemen", said he, "I am like zee bee, I buzz around but say nothing."

Mr. McFee's idea of education is splendid. In any event he is the very meat of inconsistency. Constant orthodox leanings do much to mar progress. Why incline one's head too much toward La Farge who talks about an artist's acquired memories, when we all know that the "wild ass of the desert" changes its perspective when it wakes up in Rome!

Mr. McFee mentions cricket. That redeems him. It shows he is of a kindred mind, and I make my peace with him.

Is he depressing? No indeed not. On the contrary, most invigorating. Lord Bacon was right, and he may find in his quotation of him a recommendation of his charming letter to one of the children of Yale.

Of course he has not given the key that unlocks the door of the elusive literary world. Who can? In fact his failure in that respect recommends him. "Gone with the rose" as Omar says. You know, such a rose, once plucked, never blooms again! There are as many keys as there are souls destined to roam over hill and dale.

Mr. McFee's last remark about character is superb. Most of us who object to things do so through the pin pricks of the imp of perversity, so that in writing you, I condemn myself.

I hope nevertheless to have presented a product of character, but not by any means one as exact nor as truthful as the one that reflects from McFee's epistle, and with all my objections, congratulate him.

However, the kindest heart will be accused of flattery, so I withdraw myself into the protection of a strange philosophy, which if it does not satisfy, at least pretends to explain, and that is all we are engaged in doing from the cradle to the grave. The question of "considerable difficulty in matters to write about" is part of the great illusion.

I am, with best wishes,

Yours etc.

SIEGFRIED MAAS.

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FOREIGN NOTES AND COMMENT

Translators No Longer Traitors

THE publishers of Hall Caine's "The Woman of Knockaloe" are feckfully advertising the statement that Mr. Caine's "greatest novel" has been translated into nine languages. If the ascription of superlative merit to the latest creation of the most distinguished citizen of the Isle of Man is warranted, there is nothing at all unusual about the tenfold availability that this "convincing and convicting" epic now enjoys. For there are just ten languages into which any really great work has to be translated now if the circle in which and around which it is its right to move is not to resemble the motion picture billboard of Mr. Norris's "Brass".

There is first of all English, which is manifestly destined to become the international language before the steam locomotive sees the end of its run. Then come French and German. Over the relative importance of these two let someone else fight. Then come Italian, Dutch, Dano-Norwegian, Swedish, and Czechish. This makes eight. Russian makes nine, but it is of less concern, for the Russian who can read at all can read at least one of these eight. But lest there be, here, there, or anywhere, some rare Russian who can read none of these nine, we add Polish. This makes ten.

Spanish is thus omitted, but with two thousand students in the freshman class of the University of Texas studying Spanish (which we may take as symbolic of the general situation) preparatory to swooping down on the Portuguese trade of South America, the language of Don Quixote is manifestly looking out for itself. The Japanese always have been able to do that, thanks to the translator; the Chinese are now writhing in the convulsions attendant upon the creation of a new tongue—and for all reasonable purposes this cleans up the world. More cannot be asked.

The most marked contrast in the attitude toward foreign and native languages at present is to be found in Poland and British Africa. In the land where the ultimate *ski* is as familiar as the Jens Jensens are thick in Copenhagen there is, as other writers have pointed out, a veritable and highly gratifying literary revival. But unless my trusted *Hilfsmittel* have for once proved false, the literary revival in Poland is pretty largely a matter of renascence through importation. The leading literary personage in Warsaw this morning is the translator. Poland seems determined to print, publish, sell, buy, and read in her *own* tongue the best the world created throughout those long and humiliating years when her *own* tongue was tied through oppression, split by partition, and excommunicated as an organ of speech unless the Pole was deft enough to use it in a way that would not reveal his real purpose to the police sergeant censor sent over from Moscow, Petrograd, or some other town that should have been minding its own business. Hence it is a Sienkiewicz and not a Maeterlinck who becomes the real symbolist.

The English writers who were known and read and loved in Poland previous to the world war were not nu-

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merous. With Shakespeare the Pole was of course familiar. He knew that Byron had exercised a great influence on the Polish romanticists. He knew Oscar Wilde; his jailer had told him about him. He knew Shelley, a little; he had heard of Bernard Shaw. Much further than this his information did not go. It could not go. But all of this is being changed. Under the collective title of "Historical Literary Library", Poland is bringing out a series of translations that would do credit to any country regardless of its unhappy or happy past. Tarnawski's good book on Christopher Marlowe is a case in point. The author explains, in a "preface" which he places at the end of his volume, and which is written in English, that he has endeavored to add a little to the general knowledge of a great Elizabethan dramatist, but that his main purpose is to make Marlowe accessible to his own people. Well, it must be admitted that if his objective is a more intimate familiarity with the outstanding English writers, he is going back far enough. But Tarnawski is a professor by trade, and it is as hard there as it is here to make a professor see that even "scholarly" work may be done on what is being done. Indeed it would require greater ability, and greater scholarship, to pass a sound judgment on a three starred novel of 1924 than it would to write a pamphlet of appalling erudition, seemingly, on "The Readings of the First Quarto of 'Hamlet' ".

Nor is Poland confining her attention to English; she is also bringing out much German in translation. She is now reading a modern rendering of "Werther's Sufferings"; she is doing the same with Franz Werfel's "Not the Murderer, the Murdered is Guilty"; and the same with such varied geniuses as Plato, Hans Heinz Ewers, E. T. A. Hoffmann, Ibsen, the oriental literatures—and Russian.

In the South African Union, however, the reverse of all this is true. The Dutchmen of South Africa, whether they vote in Pretoria or Pietermaritzburg, have suddenly risen to a point of order; they wish to inform the world that the Dutch they speak is not the Dutch of Rotterdam but their own; that they have no connection with the superannuated Hollander; that their tongue is their own, that their literature is their own. They are translating nothing. They are writing their own literature. And like all primitive literatures, theirs is confined pretty largely to native themes. Much of it indeed is based on the Boer War. That it does not throw the spotlight on such virtues as England may have as a colonizer may be taken for granted. That, on the other hand, Longmans (London) have seen fit to bring out an English translation of A. A. Pienaar's beast epic, "Uit Oerwoud en Vlakte" (From Plain and Forest Primæval) shows once again that the English are the best of sports, love fair play, and practise it. The Englishman's attitude toward South Africa's literary resurgence is admirable, for it is altogether intelligent. But that the Boer can raise his patois to the dignity of a real language, and that he can create a living literature in it, would not seem possible at this writing. His *Afrikaans* is too near Dutch; he himself is too close to the English. But his experiment is interesting. And should he ever bring it to the point where, say, Couperus has to be translated into *his* Dutch the world will be provided with a little bit of belletristic irony that will make the British glossary to "Babbitt" seem commonplace.

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One thing is certain: the Boer can never hope to have a great body of "national" literature without the aid of translations. The day when that could be done is gone. Hawthorne, to take a single illustration, sells well today in Christiania and Lisbon. Some high school pupil will find this out, sooner or later, in Bloemfontein, and demand that *he* be given "The Scarlet Letter" in *Afrikaans*. You cannot have radio whizzing through the cosmic air, and a reading public that is interested only in the doings of the home town, at the same time. The human mind refuses to be cheated out of its rights.

In this country, the translation campaign is proceeding beautifully. One significant phase of it is that we are reaching out for works that deal with out of the way places. There is Grazia Deledda's "La Madre" adequately translated by Mary G. Steegmann as "The Mother". It is a very brief novel. Before I had read it, my wife read it one evening between late dinner and early retiring, and she stopped once while reading it to nurse the very infant Erik. It is indeed so short that the publisher has had the translator write a "translator's note" and repeat the same material in a "translator's preface".

The first remark my wife made after finishing the book was this: "How strange that that Catholic priest in that little village should have found it unbecoming and improper to have a mirror. He was not supposed to realize that he had a body." This is one real lesson, so far as translations are concerned, to be drawn from this novel: it familiarizes us with the customs of a hamlet in Sardinia and is fascinating to us on this very account. A novel that dealt with an exclusively Catholic theme, and which laid the entire action in Rome, might have a hard road to travel if it wished to reach the goal of success in the United States in 1924; for we know Rome. That we wish to know Nuoro is to our credit, of course, but there is an explanation: the world's writers are making an attempt, and a fairly successful one, to discover the world; and we wish to read the *communiqués*. If flights to the North Pole become feasible and reasonably frequent within five years, within ten years someone will have written a bit of fiction based on life up there. And even if this creation be not wholly "convincing and convicting", it matters not what language it may be written in, it will soon be translated into nine other languages, and possibly into ten, for Hungarian is no mean tongue on its own account.

"The Mother" is a love story in a dual sense: a son who is loved by his mother, and who has been enabled to take a course of study leading to the priesthood, falls in love with a girl. What is he to do? What is to be done? Shall he follow his mother or Agnes? At the end of the book, we have the close of a church service, conducted by Paul. Agnes is present; so is the mother. Overcome with grief, dread, anguish, fear lest Agnes ruin her son at the climax of his career, the mother sinks from her seat and dies in the nave of her son's church. Will they marry now? Paul says not.

The translator states that the book is written "without offence to any creed or opinion". The assurance is so superfluous that it is almost annoying. She states too that the book "touches on no questions of either doctrine or Church government". The observation is not wholly correct. But the novel—or rather the short story—is abundantly able to act as its own

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defence. It is as deserving and intriguing a bit of writing on this subject as it has been my pleasure to take up since I first became acquainted, in rough outline and through the medium of an old collection of tales, with the affair of Abelard and Heloïse. But in making this statement I am neither trying to show up a source nor draw a comparison.

The American-Scandinavian Foundation, which is doing as much in the interests of good translations as any other body of men and women on the American continent, has now published twenty-two volumes of Scandinavian Classics, "The Poetic Edda" constituting the last two volumes, in one, of this admirable series. It is the greatest, that is, the most pretentious publication they have thus far brought out. Indeed this rendering of the "Edda" is *the* translation of the season so far as fiction in the form of poetry is concerned. Mr. Bellows has not only done his work well; he has done it excellently; he has done what should have been done long ago; he has done what many other men have promised, or threatened, to do but never did; and he has done more than merely translate the "Edda": he has arranged it in readable form, given all the variants, explained the dark if not gloomy passages, set forth its genesis, discussed its relation to similar works in other literatures, supplied it with notes, provided it with introductions, shown how the queer terms should be pronounced, told who the characters are —and in this way and for this reason has at last done what need never be done again. Part translations into English of the "Edda" have existed before. This one is complete: it is scholarly without being dull; thorough without being tedious.

There is one point however regarding it which should be made, for this great work will be read by many folks whose notion as to how this kind of work is done is not so sound as it might be. Had Henry Adams Bellows (his scholarship is so seasoned and his reputation so fixed that what may seem like a slight or even mean poke cannot harm him) gone to the original manuscripts, laid them before him, and then given the work he has given us, unaided, unguided, uninfluenced and uninspired, this would be the most captivating, most impressive, most important bit of scholarship, and the most truly remarkable bit of poetic translation that has ever been done in this country, barring none, from Longfellow and Francis James Childs down to the latest comers.

What Mr. Bellows has done, however, what it has been his rare privilege to do, has been to enjoy the cumulative research of a long line of illustrious scholars who have gone before, and to offer to the English reading world a finished product. And, wise in his own modesty, he consumes two pages at the very outset, and still more pages later on, in listing the men to whom his indebtedness has been extreme. Nor is he afraid to employ strong adjectives. He speaks of the "excellent translation" by Olive Bray (1908); of the "admirable translation" by Hugo Gering (1892); of the "competent translations in both Norwegian and Swedish"; of the "admirable translation" (recent) by Genzmer with the "excellent notes" by Andreas Heusler. He even catalogues the "partial translations" from the French. In one single paragraph he notes twenty three scholars—nearly all Germans—who have labored on various phases of the "Edda" and thereby made his monumental work a

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matter of selecting and editing rather than of original interpretation and explanation. But the fact remains that he has gone over all this material and weighed it in his own balance, and he who would claim to find him himself wanting would have to be either a reactionary wiseacre, or a shark for sun spots. Henry Adams Bellows has given us a final and really poetic translation of "The Poetic Edda", and it is the most important body of writing that has been preserved to us from the distant but distinguished past of those mighty peoples whom—in default of a term that might be more pleasing to those Americans whose biting average is a hundred—we call the *Germanic* peoples. Of them we are one. Richard Wagner was another. And had he had Bellows's translation rather than the academic one done by the Grimms and their colleagues he might have made even more out of his "Ring of the Nibelungs".

One stanza—it is from "Alvismol" or "Ballad of Alvis"—has to do with the Ocean, with the Atlantic let us say. A question has arisen as to how it is referred to. The quatrain runs:

"Sea" men call it, gods "The Smooth-Lying",
"The Wave" is it called by the Wanes;
"Eel-Home" the giants, "Drink-Stuff" the elves,
For the dwarfs its name is "The Deep".

Apropos of what has been said of the originality of Mr. Bellows's work, the footnote he writes in this connection is illuminating:

Drink-Stuff: Gering translates the word thus; I doubt it, but can suggest nothing better.

This is to say, Mr. Bellows found it impossible to improve on his predecessor, Herr Gering. To do a piece of work of this kind, it is no longer necessary to be able to read and understand the original, Old Norse or Icelandic in this case. All you have to do is to be able to read German. Point No. 1. This is a great piece of "scholarship" Mr. Bellows has turned out; were he a candidate for a professorship his already appointed and anointed colleagues would secure one for him on the basis of this work. But it requires more scholarly and critical acumen to decide today whether Anker Larsen's prize novel "The Philosopher's Stone" is a work of enduring literature, than it does to do what Mr. Bellows has done here. Yet you will never get the brethren to see it that way; you can't even make trustees see it. Point No. 2. It was only a short while ago that the proverb, "Translators are Traitors" (it was expressed in Italian in which language the two nouns are nearly the same), was accepted at par. It is no longer true. Translators nowadays hunt hard and intelligently for the right word. They are no longer "convicted" traitors; they are, potentially at least, "convincing" treaty makers. Point No. 3.

ALLEN W. PORTERFIELD

The Mother. By Grazia Deledda. Translated from the Italian by Mary G. Steegmann. The Macmillan Co.

The Poetic Edda. Translated from the Icelandic with an Introduction and Notes by Henry Adams Bellows. Two Volumes in One. The American-Scandinavian Foundation.

Notes from France

I ALWAYS expected a great book to be written on those aristocrats of the last war, the aviators. The most gripping story, and also a precious psychological document on this definite class of warriors, combine to

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make "L'Equipage", by J. Kessel, a success. There is a very frank, very simple quality of style, a real skill in avoiding the melodramatic and the expected. Isn't it a curious instance of the falsity of our usual standards, that the army fliers, who were the most conspicuous figures during the war, the only fighters whose names appeared in the public *communiqués*, the heroes that men envied and women worshiped, had to wait until now before an accurate presentation of them was put before the reading public?

It is by other merits that "Thomas l'Imposteur", by Jean Cocteau, deserves praise; it is also a war story and also deals with a specially famous corps, the *"fusiliers marins"*, on the Belgian front this time. But to the principal character, the war affords only a background. The hero's adventures are a blending of Cocteau's own experiences in the ambulance service and a portrait of a man, too young to enlist, who actually paraded for some time as being General de Castelnau's nephew, wore a uniform, ingratiated himself with high military authorities, went to the front, and might have behaved heroically had not the fraud been discovered. In the book, Thomas goes further ahead. Without any military obligation to do so, he joins the young navy officers in their dugouts, shares their life, offers himself as liaison officer, and is killed by a German patrol as he takes the shortest way instead of the safest one, in carrying a message. The pictures of early war atmosphere in the rear—at the time when busybodies and admirable people, and also some admirable busybodies, created hospitals, evacuated the wounded, fed the refugees—are all excellent, true and often cruelly so.

These two books have been issued by the Nouvelle Revue Française.

A controversy has arisen as to the authorship of "Ma Vie", a story dictated by a Russian peasant woman, Anissia, and revised by Leo Tolstoy. The translator, Charles Salomon, did his best to dispel the mystery and stated most conscientiously the facts in the case; but other people believe that Tolstoy's part in correcting the original manuscript was greater than the Russian patriarch himself admitted. The present translation, which contains passages suppressed in 1902 by the Imperial censorship, appeared in the "Cahiers Verts" of Grasset.

We have mentioned the previous volumes in the series "Les Thibault", by Roger Martin du Gard. A new fragment, "La Belle Saison", has appeared, and so has the sequel to Abel Hermant's "The Cycle of Lord Chelsea", called "Dernier et Premier Amour". At the last elections to the French Academy this novelist was brought very near a tardy but triumphant reception. Obstinate opposition has again postponed this success, and now Paris talk is concentrating exclusively on the Goncourt competition.

The "Nouvelles Littéraires", the clever weekly paper which is so full of literary news (as the title indicates), and costs so little—two cents a week, sent to America—continues its series of notable interviews. The other week with Dr. Masaryk, the Czechoslovak President, who is a fine connoisseur on French young literature. Last week with Jacques Rivière, editor of the "Nouvelle Revue Française", on the subject of Freud and Marcel Proust; but Paris seems largely to have forgotten Freud, and to be neglecting Proust after his period of unlimited vogue. It will take years before we know decidedly which

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rank Proust is to occupy in French literature.

Waldo Frank, Hendrik Van Loon, Georg Brandes are in Paris. We are trying to convince them that they should come again five months from now, and *then* form an opinion on this city, which at present is nothing but a misty, rainy, chilly place redeemed only by its bookshops. They say that their opinion on Paris was formed long ago, in spring, and that the weather could be worse, anyway. Please send more visitors of that kind.

PIERRE DE LANUX

German Literary Pen Portraits

ONE thing which practically all German literary men have in common, a singular quality enough, is the fact that they do not look like literary men. Absent is the thoughtful brow, the bushy hair, the dreamy eye—not invariably, but in the majority of cases. Take the man who is by many regarded, aside from such veterans of a passing generation as Gerhart Hauptmann, as Germany's leading writer—Thomas Mann. This sensitive stylist, this author of the passionate "Death in Venice", of the epic idyl of dogdom known in English as "Bashan and I", of the great family-history novel, reminiscent of the "Forsyte Saga" and Arnold Bennett's Five Towns masterpieces, "The Buddenbrooks", looks, stiff and straight like the Lübeck patrician merchant's son that he is, like an English retired major who has taken up some genteel kind of trading in civil life.

On a recent visit to Munich, where he lives in a large, pleasant, square villa situated in a green outer suburb on the banks of the rushing pea green Isar, I had an interesting talk with Thomas Mann, one of the clearest and most statesmanlike thinkers in Germany. "How did you come", I asked him, "to the opinions in your famous 'Address to the German Republic'? You were formerly more inclined to the conservative view." Mann smiled a non-committal smile behind his large round glasses. "The man who does not spiritually develop, in such times as these, must be an idiot", he replied simply, and the German pronunciation *Idiōt* gave the word still greater emphasis. "Even if it exposes one to the charge of being a turncoat", he added. He said that it was very necessary for leading Germans who believed in the future of the Republic and in the humanitarian idea as expressed in the democracy of the future, to make their voices heard as loudly as possible, in order to counterbalance the few noisy reactionaries who might otherwise be held to represent the public voice of the country.

Thomas Mann had been spending some months in Spain, and spoke with enthusiasm of Northern Spain, of Castile, where landscape and people so thoroughly embody the soul of old Spanish pictures; and of glowing Southern Spain with its Africanish splendors. Mann spoke of his new novel, "Der Zauberberg", the scenes of which are largely laid in Davos. The hero is a young man who goes to Davos for three weeks, finds he is sick and remains there seven years in a net of enchantment woven by the "Magic Mountain", discussing heaven and earth, not omitting politics, with the motley assembly, including a number of Russians, gathered in the famous health haunt in the hills. The novel will probably be published early in the spring.

Mann—with his scrubby little mus-

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tache, plentiful dark hair, medium height, and clothes of singular cut, with high semimilitary collar almost hiding the white one beneath—spoke idealistically of the future of Germany, recovering from a false and distorted romanticism which had become materialistic and returning to the paths of humanitarian democracy with an idealized America more or less as a lode star. The line of his afterwar spiritual development has thus led him into closer kinship with his brother Heinrich, with whom at one time he had little in common, and the fruits of this development will be apparent in the conduct of the many discussions which fill his new book, described by him as a "dialectic novel".

On the other side of Munich, on the banks of the beautiful Lake of Starnberg, lives Gustav Meyrink, whose brilliant satiric short stories formerly did much to carve away the earth from under the feet of the "distorted romanticism" of the old régime. Meyrink, whose hair is scant, and whose sharp look is that of a keen city man of intellectual tastes, has of late years become more and more absorbed in mystic literature, edits a collection of classics of magic, and writes novels so abstruse that the lay reader is prone to suspect that he is being hoaxed. But Meyrink, for all his vivid imagination, power of casting mystic glamour, and vein of ironic humor, is as serious as G. K. Chesterton in his appreciation of other-world phenomena.

A vast contrast is Walter von Molo, who unlike the two North Germans at home in southerly Munich, is an Austro-Bavarian living in Zehlendorf, an outer suburb of Berlin. With the exception of the veteran Arno Holz, von Molo—with his plentiful, unruly shock of hair, laughing eyes which can burn out of depths of gloom, mischievous laugh and buoyant vitality changing as suddenly to acute depression—is the only one of the little galaxy who thoroughly looks the part of author-poet. His temperament, combining gaiety and gloom in equal measure, has an Ariel-like quality. Yet his feet are firmly set upon the earth, and something of the broad, rough, hearty earthiness of the Bavarian tempers his Austrian artistic humor. He turns everything to fun, but beneath there is always a vein of tragic earnestness, and the strong creative imagination which has enabled him to vitalize historical figures in his great romances.

Georg Kaiser and Walter Hasenclever, two of the most modern dramatists, twin pillars of the revolutionary drama, are as the poles apart. Hasenclever, engagingly nervous, young, dark, slender, resembling a young Oxford man, is in a manner the expected type of the sleek youngster who overthrows the long since hollowed out pillars of the modern stage play. Georg Kaiser, sleepy eyed, broad faced, with domed forehead no longer rimmed with hair, with dry manner, speaking, looking, apparently thinking like an unimaginative business man, is yet a writer of far greater carrying power and lasting strength than the eager young Hasenclever. Yet a certain uneasy impression gained from the study of Kaiser's plays—that they are affairs of the brain rather than of the soul and heart—is strengthened rather than denied by a personal acquaintance with him.

There is room only for rapid portraits of two men who belong more to a past generation than to the age in which they live, yet who are both of them, by dint of their intellectual

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youthfulness, vitally connected with the living hour. Alexander Moszkowski, savant and wit, lives in Charlottenburg, a once elegant inner suburb of Berlin, now resigned to being considered comfortable and old fashioned. His faithful wife protects him from the inroads of the inquisitive and intrusive storm of admirers, and Moszkowski, over seventy years old, grey of bushy hair and mustache, eagle nosed, keen eyed, full of sardonic Jewish esprit, sits all day at his desk and still presents a riddle of impossibly prolific production to the lazier and less gifted younger men. Witticisms, short sketches, above all oddities and enigmas of popular science flow with undiminished vigor from his indefatigable pen.

Arno Holz, on the contrary, serenely throned upon the lofty pedestal of his sixty years' poetry production, files, retouches, reedits, but composes no more, or scarcely at all. His lion-like head, with its mane of silky white hair and clear parchment skin, is lit by blue eyes that can sparkle and twinkle like a boy's. He lives in a poet's garret in a poet's quarter—Schöneberg, Berlin—a little nest of a place under the roof of a big apartment house, with a great view over suburban roofs, for Holz believes that a poet should have a good prospect of the sunsets and the stars. Friends look after the worldly welfare of the unworldly old poet, whose one concern is to perfect his great work "Phantasus", and whose one ideal is the recognition of his theory of poetic rhythm. On this subject he can grow eloquent and expound and, a little glass of bright liqueur before him, strive to initiate the willing but unmathematical hearer. As one listens, one thinks of the old proverb: "They whom the Gods love may die when they will—they will yet die young."

ETHEL TALBOT SCHEFFAUER

THE GREY WOLF TO THE DOGS

By Thomas Caldecot Chubb

O HAPPY fools that are content to beat
Year after year the selfsame way around,
That, so your meals are fat, your sleep is sound,
Find life a lease of heaven, and very sweet;
Dull dogs of sloth content, not indiscreet
Enough to taste one blooded valiancy,
House broken, schooled to long monotony
Whereof will death be found the only mete;
Lift up your heads, bark thanks that you are not
Swift padders of the stark wolds, rank on rank,
Scurf furred and toughish, scrawny as a rune,
Free—aye, to mate your own kind, lean of flank,
To lose your quarry when the chase is hot,
And bay your tearing hunger to the moon.

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THE BOOKMAN'S LITERARY CLUB SERVICE

Believing that clubs will welcome an outline which combines range of subject with an authoritative understanding of the end to be achieved, the editors have brought together representative committees of authors, students, and critics to present for the use of women's clubs an outline which will contain both elements. The divisions of the series are: I. Contemporary American Fiction (see THE BOOKMAN *for October, November, December, 1922, January, 1923); II. Contemporary American Poetry (see* THE BOOKMAN *for March, April, May, June, July, August, 1923); III. Contemporary American Drama; IV. The Short Story. After contemporary American literature has been covered, programs on the historical background of our literature will be given and these will be followed by a survey of the English field.*

The BOOKMAN *programs are formed, not by the editors of this magazine but by a board of advice which has been organized to include names from various lines of literary thought in America, so that the result will represent no one group. The executive committee of advice is as follows: Mary Austin, the novelist; Dr. Arthur E. Bostwick, librarian of the St. Louis Public Library; Dr. Carl Van Doren, one of the editors of "The Century"; Hon. Maurice Francis Egan, diplomat and literary critic; Mrs. L. A. Miller, chairman of literature, General Federation of Women's Clubs; May Lamberton Becker, of the "Reader's Guide" of the New York "Evening Post"; Dr. Joseph Fort Newton, rector of the Church of the Divine Paternity, New York City; Booth Tarkington, the novelist; and Rose V. S. Berry, chairman of the fine arts committee, General Federation of Women's Clubs.*

The Editor of THE BOOKMAN *and his advisers and associates will answer promptly and to the best of their ability any question confronting any literary club. Such questions should be addressed "*THE BOOKMAN'S *Literary Club Service".*

THE BOOKMAN'S outline of contemporary drama began in the November issue with studies of Augustus Thomas, Owen Davis, Edward Sheldon, and Eugene O'Neill. In December the work of Susan Glaspell, Zoe Akins, Rachel Crothers, Alice Brown, and Zona Gale was considered. And in January, that of Louis K. Anspacher, Charles Rann Kennedy, Lewis Beach, George Cram Cook, Theodore Dreiser, Gilbert Emery, Arthur Richman, and Algernon Tassin. The committee has met several difficulties in preparing this outline. In the first place, there are innumerable dramatists whose work should be examined for an understanding of the real theatre of America. Though they may have written only one play, they indubitably belong in any such study list. In the second place, how should these dramatists be divided? After various classifications had proved unsatisfactory, the committee decided upon a purely arbitrary division. In each group presented we hope that you will find an interesting afternoon's study.

A word of warning. Many clubs when they study the drama are likely to stick closely to what is generally known as "closet" drama, often historical or poetical dramas by intellectuals of one sort or another whose plays have seldom been produced with success. We urge you not to sniff at the commercial theatre. It is, after all, the root of drama. If you would understand the technique of the theatre, you must know Avery Hopwood and George M. Cohan as well as Eugene O'Neill and Percy MacKaye.

For each of the following dramatists we give a selected list of his published plays, as well as the names of any easily procurable magazine articles dealing with him and his work. As a general bibliography the following books are suggested:

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The Changing Drama. Archibald Henderson. STEWART KIDD.
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The Drama and the Stage. Ludwig Lewisohn. HARCOURT, BRACE.
The Twentieth Century Theatre. William Lyon Phelps. MACMILLAN.
Seen on the Stage. Clayton Hamilton. HOLT.
The Theatre of Tomorrow. Kenneth Macgowan. BONI, LIVERIGHT.

Anthologies

Chief Contemporary Dramatists, First and Second Series. Thomas H. Dickinson. HOUGHTON MIFFLIN.
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Longer Plays by Modern Authors (American). Helen Louise Cohen. HARCOURT, BRACE.
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CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN DRAMA

Committee: Kenneth Macgowan, Chairman; Owen Davis, Jesse Lynch Williams, Alexander Woollcott.

Fourth Group

JAMES FORBES

The Famous Mrs. Fair, *The Chorus Lady* } Included in *The Famous Mrs. Fair and Other Plays.* DORAN.

James Forbes is a technician of recognized abilities; in the racy dialogue of "The Chorus Lady" he showed his greatest originality. In "The Famous Mrs. Fair" he essayed the problem play and produced a piece of delicacy and insight. He is a careful workman. What he lacks in spontaneity he achieves in technique. Mr. Forbes was born in Salem, Ontario, Canada, but is an American citizen. He has been actor, dramatic critic, and press representative. Like the other men in this group, he knows his theatre and loves it.

"In the thirteen years which elapsed between the composition of those two plays ['The Chorus Lady' and 'The Famous Mrs. Fair'], it is quite evident that Mr. Forbes considerably deepened his conception of what he means by 'character', moving from the superficial to the fundamental, from externals to internals, from mannerisms to manners. He has thus moved from a play which suffers severely under the test of print to one which can meet the test with the assurance born of a reasoned reflection on life and human motives. One wishes that from this individual case, he could draw an analogy taking in the whole field of American drama; that he could say it is with all our playwrights as it is with Mr. Forbes."—Walter Prichard Eaton in his Introduction to *The Famous Mrs. Fair and Other Plays.*

"What first strikes the attentive reader of Mr. Forbes's handsome volume is the poverty of observation. Two of the three plays deal with the little theatrical world in which he has been busy for twenty years. Yet he has not seen that world directly at all. The superficial bits of verisimilitude are pure veneer. Nature is hard to reach even for those who see her. To Mr. Forbes her face, like that of the idol Sais, is veiled."—Ludwig Lewisohn, NATION, December 29, 1920.

REFERENCE:

The Plays of James Forbes. AMERICAN MAGAZINE, November, 1910.

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DAVID BELASCO

The Return of Peter Grimm. Included in *Modern American Plays.*

David Belasco was born at San Francisco in 1859. He is the master technician of the American theatre. His productions are countless and number among them some of our most successful as well as our most artistic American efforts. He has been active as a dramatist during his entire life, having written plays himself, collaborated on many others, and adapted still more from foreign languages. With H. C. De Mille he wrote "The Charity Ball", with John Luther Long "The Darling of the Gods", with George Scarborough, "The Son-Daughter". It was he who adapted "Kiki". He wrote "The Girl of the Golden West". His life in the theatre has been a long and a brilliant one, and he has not lost the magic touch.

"Only a single dominant figure out of these early days survives—David Belasco, master of traditional finesse, inheritor, practitioner and interpreter of that past as well as occasionally willing student of the new, living link between two distant and unacquainted generations. Others there are, apprenticed to the pioneer traditions—call-boys, program boys, chips of the old block, youngsters trained under the Elder Showmen and absorbing some of their manners, methods, secrets. That lore they still apply today by rote, by shrewd adaptation to new conditions, with even an occasional recognition of the theatre's wider vista."—Oliver Sayler in *Our American Theatre.*

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EUGENE WALTER

The Easiest Way. Included in *Chief Contemporary Dramatists, Second Series.*

An expert writer of melodrama, Eugene Walter went far toward paving the way for the host of sex thrillers that followed "The Easiest Way". He was born at Cleveland, and was both newspaperman and theatrical promoter and manager. His plays have been many, and of varying success; but "The Easiest Way" is important because of its undoubted influence on the manners of the American stage.

REFERENCE:

Eugene Walter, an American Dramatic Realist. DRAMA, vol. 21 (1916), pp. 110-121.

ELMER RICE

The Adding Machine. DOUBLEDAY, PAGE.

Having started life as a lawyer, Elmer Rice suddenly decided to become a writer. His first effort was the successful melodrama "On Trial", which netted him a fortune. His experimentally expressionistic "The Adding Machine" was presented by the Theatre Guild last year. It shocked some persons and pleased and impressed others. Mr. Rice has undoubtedly a strongly original mind, and a talent for the theatre. He has worked with the motion pictures, has written other plays not so notable as "On Trial" and "The Adding Machine".

"Here [in 'The Adding Machine'] life is reduced to numerical precision. Here, we have murder, trial, death and immortality in terms of ones, twos and sixes. Here, written

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by a young man who has already made a fortune in the commercial theatre, is a piece of elaborate and, in spite of serious defects, striking expressionism. Mr. Zero, operator of an adding machine, hates his drab wife and kills his boss. He goes to Heaven, where, Mr. Rice would have us believe, a man cannot be greater than he was on earth. The first four scenes of this play are as effective drama as has been written by a young American."—John Farrar.

REFERENCE:

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JESSE LYNCH WILLIAMS

Why Marry? Included in *Contemporary American Plays.*

Jesse Lynch Williams is a writer of comedy of rare distinction. His "Why Marry?" received the Pulitzer Prize for the best play of 1917. Mr. Williams was born at Sterling, Illinois, was graduated from Princeton University, and has written stories and essays as well as plays. At present he is living in New York City.

GEORGE M. COHAN

Seven Keys to Baldpate. FRENCH.

Perhaps no one in America knows quite so well how to construct a popular success on a recognized pattern as does George M. Cohan. Not only is he a clever man in theatrical trickery and sentiment but he can mix satire with sentiment in just the right proportion to please the public. As actor, as manager, as playwright he has the unmistakable and the refreshing Broadway touch. As a technician he is well worth studying; as a personality, no one is more characteristic of the theatre of Broadway during the past ten years. He was born in Providence, Rhode Island, began acting at the age of nine, and has been connected with things theatrical ever since.

"Cohan, son of Père Jere, born barnstorming, brought up barnstorming, barnstorming still on a scale commensurate with contemporary Manhattan, playwright by the grace of God, showman by force of training and habit. And as producer, he has uncanny instinct to know what goes, from comedy and melodrama to farce and revue, building his effort, whether 'Seven Keys' or 'Little Nellie Kelly', not only of the theatre, by the theatre, for the theatre, but also in the theatre in course of rehearsal."—Oliver Sayler in *Our American Theatre.*

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The Past of George M. Cohan. M. White, Jr. MUNSEY'S, April, 1911.

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THE GOSSIP SHOP

WE watched with much interest for the letters from the children who won our prize essay contest. For what books would they ask? Obviously they were young people of intelligence, and what were young people of intelligence reading or wanting to read today? The answers reveal much and need no comment. One requests "West of the Water Tower", Homer Croy's realistic sex novel; another, A. S. M. Hutchinson's plea for woman in the home, "This Freedom". One child asks for Sandburg's "Rootabaga Stories" and another craves "This Singing World". Two want Van Loon's "Story of Mankind"; one, "The Three Musketeers"; and one sends the following list of books which he wishes purchased with his prize money: "The Humanizing of Knowledge", "Longer Plays by Modern Authors"; "Ten Minute Plays", "Best Plays of 1922-23", "What Books Can Do for You", and "American Nights Entertainment".

Lewis Beach is a young playwright of considerable activity. When we wrote the note concerning him in the Club Service last month, we were quite unable to find the latest news of him. Our information is now more complete. His comedy "The Goose Hangs High" is now in rehearsal. His "Play in Seven Scenes, Ann Vroome" will probably soon be produced, and is soon to be published. Take it all in all, he is a very active young man. Of other playwrights we hear rumblings: Owen Davis's "Peacocks" is in rehearsal, a comedy on Jim Whistler is in the distant offing; Sidney Howard is at work on a pageant and has a new play in his pocket; Philip Barry's "Poor Richard" is being rehearsed—and so it goes.

In November Rose Fyleman started editing a monthly magazine for children, "The Merry-Go-Round" — and a delightful magazine it is, published by Basil Blackwell. In it we find contributions by Eleanor Farjeon, A. A. Milne, Miss Fyleman herself, and such illustrations as make the mouth water! Not without its originality is a "Page for Parents".

Anthologies of verse become innumerable. Here are two more on our desk this morning, one in bright red covers with a gold top, entitled "Virginian Writers of Fugitive Verse", edited by Armistead C. Gordon, Jr. There is some good verse in it but it will be of interest chiefly to Virginians. One of the best of these anthologies is "The Book of the Rhymers' Club", published at Cleveland, Ohio, with such friendly names as Helen Ives Gilchrist, Edwin Meade Robinson, and John French Wilson. Then there's the luxurious "Yearbook of the Poetry Society of South Carolina", which has much interesting material, good poetry, and the record of one of the most enterprising poetry societies in the country. The "Second Anthology of Verse Writers' Club of Southern California" is zealous enough, while "A Book of the Year" (concerning the Poetry Society of Texas) contains some really lovely things; for example "Design" by Karle Wilson Baker:

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DESIGN

I ripen in a charm'ed air:
I draw one ray from years of sun,
And from the floods beneath the grass
One ichored drop—and only one.

I wrestle with the quarreling winds
That from the sundered quarters blow,
But one cool breath that is my own
I seize—and let the others go.

I build a bubble out of bronze:
Quarry a dewdrop from the rock—
A sphered fragility to hang
And shine above the thunder-shock.

Richmond is a city that we could learn to like, we think, almost as much as our own Vermont. That's strange for a Yankee, too, isn't it? Our visit to Richmond was notable chiefly for the people we didn't see. However, it was a hasty and not a literary pilgrimage. We did not see Mary Newton Stanard, whose charming "Richmond, Its People and Its Story" has recently been published. We did not see all the editors of "The Reviewer". We talked with Mrs. James Branch Cabell over the telephone. We saw Carl Van Vechten in a hotel and heard that Joseph Hergesheimer was in the neighborhood. We visited the Poe Shrine and were much impressed that anyone should take the memory of a poet so seriously. We shuddered before the glass incased lock of Libby Prison, and noted with surprise the Confederate flag flying on Monument Avenue. We telephoned Ellen Glasgow and found that she had left for New York. We returned to New York City and found Miss Glasgow, who is as quick mannered and quick witted a lady as we have ever encountered. She told us that she has spent nearly a year working on her next novel but that there is at least a year's work more to be done. It is to be of Virginia; more than that she refused to divulge. She explained a fact which many authors find to be true—that if you tell the idea of a poem or the plot of a story, you lose a certain zest in

Ellen Glasgow

the writing of it. The mere relation is, in a sense, an act of creation and you tend, after you see the effect of your narrative on an audience, to turn to a new plot or idea instead of the one on which you are already working.

Charles J. Finger's "Highwaymen", with its unusual illustrations from wood blocks by Paul Honoré, is an unusual and exciting book. We who have always longed to be a highwayman find its accounts of bold, bad, gallant rogues, enchanting. What could be more romantic than this?

Says the old ballad, of Claude Duval:
"When I was mounted on my steed,
I thought myself a man indeed;
With pistol cock'd and glittering sword,
Stand and Deliver was the word
Which makes me now lament to say,
Pity the fall
Of great Duval
Well a day,
Well a day."

A plumed hat had he and horse trappings of red leather, with silver bit and stirrups, and two diamonds shone like stars at his belt. At his side was a dagger with gilt-

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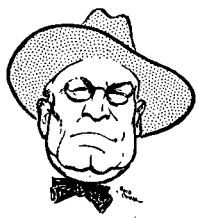
dressed leather case, his spurs were of gold and the scabbard of his sword showed neither speck nor stain. These were the things of the eye, but in his heart there were golden dreams of setting crooked things straight, of letting lowly folk go free and taking heavy toll of those whose worldly affairs were in happy state.

We have never consciously met Harry Leon Wilson, yet he is one of the few men in the world we should really like to meet. Ever since we read "Ruggles" we have had that desire. It was further strengthened by "Bunker Bean", "Merton of the Movies", and "Oh, Doctor!" But what is our chance now when he is busy cruising about in the South Seas, having left his comfortable house in Monterey, California? There, his publishers tell us, he is studying the rudimentary form of golf which is said to be played by the Polynesian aborigines. He recently wrote to his publishers in this vein: "I see the reviewers are still saying, 'Well, if this fellow Wilson would only settle down and write something serious we might expect something serious and worthwhile from his pen!'" Personally, we expect nothing of the sort. So, there! Nor want it, either.



Harry Leon Wilson

We were present at quite the nicest tea party of the year at the National Arts Club where there were countless lovely young ladies; but the outstanding figure of the day for us was Henry Holt, gallant as always, courtly, with a pleasant welcome for all. Here were William De Mille's daughters, and Mrs. Dawson-Scott's son. Here were Mary Austin's niece and Ida Clyde Clarke's son. Margaret Widdemer we saw, and Floyd Dell, with his wife; William Beebe, and many, many more. Going on to another house we saw Irvin Cobb, who assured us that he would not mind any amount of criticism which we might aim at him in a "Spotlight". This is a comfort; for we are scarcely able to bear up under the onslaught of vituperation which is leveled at us from one quarter; in fact, we have found from the publication of this series how very, very tender indeed is the human skin of authors. Amy Lowell, too, was in New York City not long ago, and with the most engaging editor (we should call her "editress", only she wouldn't like it) we listened to further accounts of exploratory adventures in the realm of Keats manuscripts and incidents. What a fascinating book this "Life of Keats" bids fair to be.

Pete Conklin is dead! He was one of America's best known clowns. He was one of the oldest. Of late years you might have seen him, with drooping whiskers and genial mien, seated in front of the baby incubator at Luna Park in Coney Island. We are very sorry that he will not be there next season; for one of our happiest memories is of a supper we had with Pete some years ago, when he told us tales of old circus days as we ate clam chowder on a Coney Island pier and dreamed vaguely of sawdust, of clowning, and of echoes of applause.

We had seldom witnessed the first night of a mammoth motion picture. It was an impressive experience: "glittering" is surely the *mot juste* to apply to the spectacle before the stage where Cecil B. De Mille's "The Ten Commandments" was presented to its

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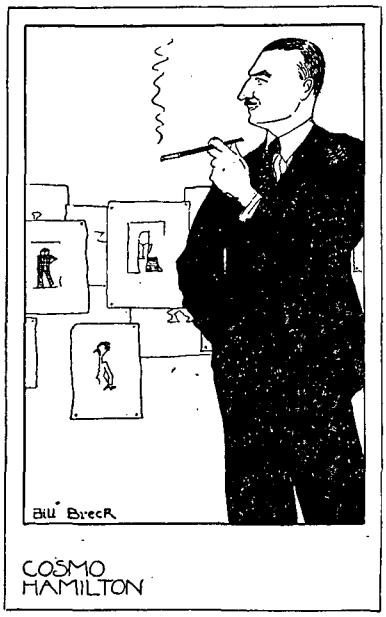
first audience in New York City. We could give a list of those who attended, but you might just as well read the latest edition of "Photoplay" and take your choice, or Bob Sherwood's "Who's Who in the Movies". Everyone who wasn't at the moment in Hollywood was there. The crowds who besieged the exits afterward were annoyed when one of their idols attempted to escape. Gloria Swanson and her escort Rod La Roque were unable to get to their car. The crowd practically mobbed them. Just what was demanded in the way of souvenirs was hard to fathom. Some of the onlookers mistook Mr. La Roque for the immaculate Valentino. Death by crushing seemed imminent; but the stars finally escaped pursuit in a taxicab. Can you name us an author whose appearance would be thus heralded on Broadway? We have attended few other first nights this month, although the second night of "The Song and Dance Man" was gala enough. What good entertainment it is, too. There sat Gilbert Seldes, the highbrow critic of "The Dial", applauding the agile George Cohan vociferously. There too, Stark Young, even higher browed, perhaps, laughing heartily in spite of himself. John Emerson and Anita Loos marched back and forth from the front row, also Marc Connelly (the new Kaufman-Connelly piece is already in rehearsal), and the willowy Edith King. Don't miss this play if you like the theatre and a fine mixture of sentiment and satire.

In the new serial story on which he is now working, Cosmo Hamilton is said to have changed his style of writing completely, or rather, perhaps, to have returned to an earlier style, in which he wrote the realistic "Outpost of Eternity" in the days before the war. This most prolific of the Gibbs brothers (Sir Philip and Arthur Hamilton being the other two) has recently offered a new play to Broadway, which exhibits his unusual faculty for choosing the arresting title. (At present writing we have not seen the play. Possibly it, too, is arresting.) His play is called



"The New Poor"; and that name immediately suggests a clarion call to the movies. Cosmo Hamilton's gossip and reminiscent details of England and America, etc., which have been appearing in "The Saturday Evening Post", will be published shortly in book form as "Unwritten History". Meanwhile it is scarcely necessary to refer again to Mr. Hamilton's faultless appearance, his constant attendance at polo grounds and social functions, his urbane manner, or his biting wit. Arthur Hamilton Gibbs, his brother, wrote during the

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war a volume called "Gun Fodder". By many persons it was considered one of the finest of the war books. It has just been reissued and will add another volume to the small list in our own library which includes, "Gallipoli", "Through the Wheat", "The Odyssey of a Torpedoed Transport", and "A Son at the Front".

We have met Mrs. C. A. Dawson-Scott, the English founder of the P. E. N. Club, a positive, quick witted woman, author of numerous novels and editor of a recent collection of English short stories. She says that since she came to America she has discovered "a whole new literature in the English language". The question is, why did she have to come to America to discover it? Willa Cather, recently returned from Europe, already hard at work again, proved as calm, as sane, as keenly intelligent as ever. Talking with her was Genevieve Larsson, Scandinavian, born in a log cabin in Wisconsin, distinctly of Miss Cather's environment. Miss Larsson, too, has been writing of her own people, and with great success. This was the first time she had met Miss Cather. She told me that while she admired Miss Cather tremendously, she had always been afraid of reading too much of her work, because the material with which they both worked was so similar that she did not want to be overly impressed by the older writer. Maxwell Aley of "The Woman's Home Companion" is already busy with plans for welcoming the International P. E. N. Club when they gather from all quarters of the globe in New York City this spring. Honoré Willsie (Mrs. William Morrow), tall, dark, large eyed, explained to us that what she knew about dinosaurs was really very little and could all be found in "The Exile of the Lariat". William Beebe, the explorer, became involved in a discussion of cats and boa constrictors. Mr. Beebe had just finished his new book on — is it the Galapagos? We have always considered Mr. Beebe one of the five most fortunate men in the world. He has the perfect means of escape from the world. He is not only the literary man and the scientist but the explorer. People come to him with offers of yachts, maybe of battle ships for all we know — if "you'll only show us the wonders of the world". Mr. Beebe asked us if we knew that the only fear babies are ever born with is a fear of cats. This he proved in his travels by experiments with negro babies, while the same fact had been proved by experiment with white babies. Presently talk drifted to hypnotism and psychics. Into this Captain Arthur Mason was naturally projected. Do you remember his "Flying Bo'sun", one of the best modern short stories we know? It was at his house, at the invitation of Genevieve Mason, his remarkable wife, that our mother and we sang Christmas carols and ate Christmas waffles on Christmas morning. It was in some ways much the nicest Christmas we've ever spent.

Maurine Robb, in conversation with Bliss Carman, gleaned several interesting bits about new poems to be published soon:

Making friends with Bliss Carman is a fascinating diversion. He is quite the poet, even to the proverbial flowing cravat and the friendly, worn corduroy suit. Singing in the wilderness of New Canaan, this lyric mystic has entranced the ear of the British public while his nearer audience has been almost wholly unaware of his existence. I remembered the experience of Mohammed with the mountain and went to New Canaan, to find a tall, lean figure of a man, imbued

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with wonder and reverence for the beauties of nature, especially of the autumn glories in the Silver Mine Valley surrounding New Canaan. Tossing back his head in what I soon discovered to be a characteristic gesture, he raised his long arm and pointed across the little river to a mass of crimson foliage. "Look! Is it not glorious? Wonderful! Connecticut is the most beautiful state in the union." Then, relaxing from his rapt mood, he turned with a twinkle in his eye to remark, "Why do I think so? Because I live here." Proof sheets of Odell Shepard's new book, called simply and startlingly "by the name of its subject, 'Bliss Carman'", were lying on the table in Mr. Carman's study at Sunshine House, the residence of Dr. and Mrs. King (the Mary Perry King who collaborated with Bliss Carman in producing several pageants). Mr. Shepard is evidently one of her coterie, too, for his book is dedicated to her. Since he is away in Europe, he has entrusted the proof reading to Bliss Carman, who laughingly says, "Now is my chance to say pretty things about my own poetry." This next year promises to be quite a banner year for Mr. Carman, for in addition to the critical book of Odell Shepard's, due to appear almost any moment, Mr. Carman promises another volume of his own poetry, and has almost completed his work on the Oxford edition of American contemporary verse.

The death of Frank I. Cobb, editor of the New York "World", takes from us in his prime the most brilliant writer of editorials in America, with the possible exception, political prejudice aside, of Arthur Brisbane. Mr. Cobb as we knew him was a gentle, kindly, quiet mannered man. He spoke in public with great force and acumen. He was sincere, steadfast, brave. He based his political convictions on study and then on knowledge. He was liberal, and never afraid to take a stand outside the general pathway. His loss is a great one to the newspaper public, to the journalistic profession, to the nation.

At a luncheon recently Signor Pirandello, the Italian playwright, discussed various types of artists, and then became specific as he paid tribute to Mme. Duse. He does not speak English. He is slight, active, with white hair and snapping eyes. He did not begin to write plays until he was fifty. Before that he had done quantity production of varieties of literary efforts. In his personality geniality is more evident than the satirical note to be found in some of his plays. Brock Pemberton is about to present a cycle of them to America, including the "Six Characters in Search of an Author", already seen here, and commencing with "Henry IV". To welcome Signor Pirandello arose Frank Crowninshield with the usual graceful tributes. Here one saw Edward Knoblock, deep in

Pirandello

the construction of a new drama which has a most colorful setting—for which we prepared to gather material not long ago but found nothing, alas, but disappointment. Here, too, Johnny Weaver, with the nice clean manuscript of a play "in the American Language" to be called, *à la* one

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of his best poems, "Love 'em and Leave 'em". Good advice? Here, Owen Johnson and George Barr McCutcheon. Here Charles Hanson Towne, and many distinguished gentlemen of Italy whose names we found difficult to pronounce and impossible to remember.

George S. Bryan, the gentle Yankee poet, arrived in town not long ago from the Connecticut hills. He is as humorously inclined as ever, and as hard working. Probably more of his poems have appeared in F. P. A.'s "The Conning Tower" than may be easily reckoned, yet he assures us that he has never met F. P. A. Mr. Bryan has been engaged on a series of volumes that interest us mightily. They are to be called "The Useful Knowledge Books" and two of them have already been published, "The Outline of Radio" by John V. L. Hogan and "Practical Amateur Photography" by William S. Davis. In planning and in editing these volumes, Mr. Bryan has kept in mind the fact that usually such practical handbooks are written without much regard for style or character. We find that G. S. B. has been remarkably successful in his efforts. These volumes are both informative and readable. They represent much careful work. They should be a great addition to the handy literature of handy men and women.

Our mail brings us many bits of news from far and near which we, like some invalid bound by four walls, seize upon with interest. Here comes a note from Ralph D. Paine, from the U. S. S. "Concord". The last time we saw him he was a New Hampshire farmer — now he says: "New Hampshire was never like this! I am bound out for a four months' voyage in this new scout cruiser to points never before visited by an American man of war, the Gulf of Aden, Port Sudan, Djibuti in Somaliland, Berbera, then down the East Coast of Africa, to Madagascar, Zanzibar, Mombasa, around the Cape of Good Hope and across the South Atlantic to South America. I am planning some inland trips, into Abyssinia, Uganda, etc. Excellent grist for my mill. I played in luck to be invited to go along by the Navy Department. I shall present your compliments to the Sultan of Zanzibar." From Charles G. Norris, postmarked Palermo, the following:

> We are at the end of the trail,—that is "the end" until we start for home around the middle of March. We are sumptuously housed in a real honest to God hotel with rooms that open right out into a very delicious, tropical garden and the Mediterranean comes to within fifty feet of our windows. The weather is perfection and if ever good work ought to be done it is here. Mrs. Norris is commencing her new serial for "The Delineator" and I will start the new book tomorrow.

Percy MacKaye, whose new play of Kentucky life, "This Fine Pretty World", has recently been presented at the Neighborhood Playhouse in New York City, has written an article for the January "Graphic" on his researches among our mountain people. He has called it "Untamed America". We quote one incident because it is so typical of the unnurtured beauty of the mountain mind as we have known it and as Mr. MacKaye has apparently found it:

> "Onct, when I were a leetle feller, I seed a thunder-ball—the likes of a comet-star. Hit come along a big black cloud, lightnin' shootin' through and through. And the cloud split open, and hit blazed a ball big as a washin' tub, which the valley was claired up and ye could see away-y back yander. Hit come straight-over Black Mountin, and thar hit busted—big a noise as a cannon—on the battlements. And thou-

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sands of sparks they was falling, like fox-fire, when wet hit shines of a night and light enough to travel by: like black balls of rosin, and hit burnin'. And the star-ball hit split that-thar cloud same 's a big saw-log comin' down the current; and hit were standin' apart that cloud, which the storm shone through hit, and hit went jist as straight as a gun would a-shot a bullet from west to east. Sech rain I never seed fall in my life!"

To this aged poet of nature, whose master fiddling in the hills has rejoiced the hearts of four generations, I owe intimations of the values of synthetic life, revelations of quick sympathy with all sentient things, which I would not swap for any specialty of the universities. He first taught himself to read in middle manhood when, taken ill, he lay on his cabin floor, face upward to his close-held Bible, which—already knowing mainly by heart—he was able to decipher from oral memory. Fortunate for him (as also for other thousands of mountaineers) that his first literacy led him to the splendors of speech in the St. James Version. Yet before then his poetic gifts were bred of a noble illiteracy.

Way down East Fortieth Street, New York, is the Sculptor's Gallery, a long cheerful room opening from the street. Recently they have been showing the sculpture and paintings of young artists. Robin Field's landscapes had a spontaneity that was very pleasing and Warren Dahler in panels, tall screen, or intricately decorated chest showed with beautiful results an appreciation and skilful use of the varying tones of gold. The Montross Gallery has been exhibiting modern water colors. We remember most a winter road by Bertram Hartmann; bold strokes of blue and brown on white paper making all the cold but glowing attraction of the snow, deeply shadowed and accented by bare trees. It was invigorating. Also it made us grateful for the pleasant sizzle of the heater in the early morning. Another room was completely hung with water colors by Arthur P. Hunt. Some of them were rather unusual in that they were night scenes. Yet what time of the twenty four hours is as fascinating as blue dusk or night with yellow lights here and there? While most of these sketches were done abroad, that is the sort of beauty that one can find anywhere. Marie Laurencin is perhaps the best known of women painters in France, and the examples of her work, hung at the Wildenstein Galleries, were charming and graceful with a fine, delicate sense of color. Someone told us that Malvina Hoffman was showing three splendid heads of Paderewski at the Grand Central Station Gallery. We have been interested in her sculpture ever since the long ago day when we saw a black and red bacchante poster of Pavlowa in the window of a little cheap restaurant and begged it from the astonished proprietor, who had lent it advertising space. By the time we finally reached the exhibit we were disappointed to find but one head of the pianist. Chester Beach had many small attractive bronzes. Since this is a literary magazine we must make special mention of the book ends, of which Edith Parsons's lovable vagrant pups were perhaps the most appealing as well as the most amusing.

Every now and then Frank Swinnerton pops into the office, smiles, bows, tells us a joke, and vanishes again to deliver a lecture in some far corner of the globe. We think that he is the most difficult man in the world to disturb, the most tolerant and practically the most whimsical. In his refreshing attitude toward life he reminds us occasionally of Peter Pan; but surely, Peter Pan never looked out of eyes so satanically analytical as are Mr. Swinnerton's. Which reminds us that Maude Adams has joined the ranks of the Film

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Guild and will turn all her attention from now on to the development of the motion pictures. She has already perfected an extraordinary lighting device which is said to give, in the studio, the effect of depth and distance otherwise obtainable only out of doors. She will not give up her production of Kipling's "Kim", however.

Jim Tully is a vigorous and sentimental gentleman. We like him. Here's a sketch of him sent us by James Edward Hungerford of California.

"Jim" — he doesn't like James, because it sounds severe and affected — Tully, Los Angeles self educated writer, author of "Emmett Lawler", a book that brought him fame almost over night and made him to be hailed as a second Jack London, spoke before a select gathering for the first time in his life, recently, at a club luncheon where women predominated. He had often appeared before audiences in the prize ring, but this was his first appearance in the "circle feminine". And to speak in Jim's own vernacular, he "got away with it", and ended his talk abruptly and naïvely by saying: "That'll be all."

He revealed a remarkable story of human interest, of inspiration, of a philosophy evolved from a life of woe, loneliness, and hunger, both physical and spiritual.

"I got a present that I liked last Christmas", he related near the end of his talk. "It was from the fellows I'd come up with. Most of them are completely whipped by life. They didn't have a chance, and, like me, they had no one who cared enough about them to help them get a start. But they don't grudge me my little success. The gift was a candle in a silver candlestick, and one of the fellows who knew how to write scribbled on a card tied to the candle: 'May the light of truth never be put out by material success, and don't forget your old pals'."

"I never will forget them. They needn't worry. They and little children who are orphans — as I was — are what I *live* for now. I've been a heater of links in a chain factory; a pugilist; a hobo; a vagrant in New York City, when I walked up Fifth Avenue not daring to go to the municipal aid station, for it would be the *third* time, and that meant arrest; seeing dogs in limousines, with pink ribbons around their necks, and I with no place I dared to stop, much less sleep. I got this book, 'Emmett Lawler', in my head six years ago, and couldn't get it out. I wrote verse for the Cleveland 'Plain Dealer', and I used to punish those fellows by reading my verse to them before it was printed. I surely owe them something now!

"I thought I had my book finished, but it only had five thousand words. I worked fourteen hours a day to bring it up to ninety thousand, and then I fell in with Rupert Hughes. He encouraged me a lot and helped me. At last, I dared to send it to a publisher, and in ten days I got a telegram accepting it.

"I believe in my country. It's great! But something is *wrong*, when there are so many who want work, and there is nothing for them to do. Perhaps it was my fault, back in those days, when I was a vagrant. But long before that I'd resolved with all the strength I had that I wouldn't *crush* myself. And surely the little children, who are terribly hungry today, are not to blame. . . . We must help them now.

"There are two million of them at this moment in America, just like me when I was a little shaver fresh from the orphans' home, and made a slave of to someone who had no use for me, except as I worked. These millions, under ten years of age, work, and seventy per cent are crippled from work they have to do.

"I like to read Browning, but I get real mad at him when he says: 'God's in his Heaven: all's right with the world.' Maybe it is all right in *His* Heaven, and in *His* world, but Browning never went to bed kicked by some brute until he was sore, and without anything to eat for two days. That's what some of us have done. And we didn't grow on it either! But it isn't the hunger for bread that goes so hard, but just the fact that no one cares for us. I'm going to give my life, the rest of it, to seeing that sort of hunger just a little less among children.

"Oh, yes, we find *help* after we reach the shore. People are good to me now, and I thank them for it. But I am one in a thousand. The other nine hundred and ninety-nine are completely crushed. They never look up to the stars. They never find *love*. Let's you an' I help them to find it. I thank God for people like you!"

Jim Tully is big and rugged and red headed. He looks like a big tough prize-fighter — but his heart is the heart of a little child. That's why he *loves* them.

Professor Willmann, whose great work on education was reviewed last month by Mr. Porterfield, died not in 1907, as stated, but in 1920.

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